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North & West edition No 715

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Will Euro 2016 reawaken our mindless optimism?

INCREDIBLY, it was 20 years ago this month that England hosted the Euro 96 football tournament; a summer which with rose-tinted specs firmly attached to the end of my nose, saw us all bask in sunshine and take pride in our brave boys on the pitch.

The reality, of course, was that the opening match against Switzerland was a classic underwhelming England performance and but for a dodgy penalty we may not have beaten Scotland. And it rained.

But we'll forget that. Instead we'll relish the memories of a simply scintillating performance against Holland where we played in a manner few of us have seen England deliver before or since as we walked away 4-1 winners and that rarest of things - a victory in a penalty shoot-out against Spain.

Even the semi-final against Germany was a corker - and defeat was only by the inevitable



Editor **Chris Britcher**

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spot kicks.

Yet it was a tiny ray of sunshine amid two decades of mostly lack lustre performances. Sometimes we'd shine, more often than not we'd flop.

In fact, we've been so underwhelming the mindless optimism and fervour which used to accompany every major tournament has now all but disappeared.

Which is a shame in many ways, because although we used to think we could win everything (and then prove ourselves incapable on all counts) it did mean everyone really cared. Now the public mood is more apathetic than anticipatory.

For anyone under 25, however, England performing well and getting within touching distance of a final has never been experienced. So perhaps it's time for them to experience that buzz at long last.

Good luck England!



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Another delay hits plans for London Paramount

By Chris Britcher

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THE multi-billion pound proposed London Paramount Park entertainment resort has confirmed yet another delay in the long-running saga of its creation.

London Resort Company Holdings (LRCH), the developer behind the ambitious project for the Swanscombe peninsula, revealed on Friday a planning application will now not be made until next year. It had originally suggested it would be filed this summer.

It had been hoped work would get under way on building the project later this year and open by Easter 2021.

However, LRCH insists it continues to make "good progress" and that the scheme is not in any doubt.

David Testa, on behalf of London Paramount, said: "While we had hoped to have submitted an application by now, it is much more important to ensure the evidence base is robust and comprehensive to maximise the prospects of success, which means the preparation time is longer. The funds are in place to take this project through



FUTURE: Every delay stokes fears over just when the park will eventually emerge

the planning process.

"We received a wealth of feedback at our consultations last year which, along with new information from further studies we have conducted in the area, has allowed us to refine our masterplan. We were always conscious that there was a need to share more detailed information in relation to transport and ecology and we've been working hard on those reports.

"We have decided that, given some of the changes we are making to the masterplan, we should hold a further round of public consultation on the updated information. This decision comes as part of our continued dialogue with the planning inspectorate and local authorities in Dartford, Gravesham and Kent, and the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation. Following the further consultation events, we intend to

submit our application to the planning inspectorate in 2017."

London Paramount will be an entertainment park on the scale of Disneyland Paris, offering a host of rides using a licensing deal with movie studio Paramount to brand attractions with big names such as Star Trek and Mission Impossible.

Creating some 27,000 jobs and offering thousands of hotel rooms, it will feature rides, live music venues, cinemas and restaurants.

Jobs blow as high street chain BHS joins list of collapsed big names

HUNDREDS of jobs across the county look set to be lost after it was confirmed this week that retailer BHS was to go into liquidation.

The struggling traditional high street chain had suffered in recent years and went into administration in April. Administrators were Duff & Phelps - the same firm now fighting to restructure and save Margate's Dreamland park (see page 26).

BHS has stores in Maidstone, Hempstead Valley, Gravesend, Tunbridge Wells and Ashford.

Nationwide, 11,000 jobs will go.

Although multiple offers were received by the administrators, which were tasked with trying to find a buyer for the chain, none were able to complete a deal due the working capital required to secure the future of the company.

As a result of the wind down all 163 stores will be in close down sale mode over the coming weeks and whilst administrators say continuing efforts will be made to sell stores, the jobs of

8,000 members of staff are likely to go.

A further 3,000 jobs of non-BHS employees who work in the stores may also be at risk.

It is the biggest retail failure since Woolworths went bust in 2008.

Philip Duffy, managing director of Duff & Phelps, explained: "The British high street is changing and in these turbulent times for retailers, BHS has fallen as another victim of the seismic shifts we are seeing.

"The tireless work and goodwill of the existing management team and employees of BHS with the support of my team were not enough to change the fortunes of the company."

BHS fell into administration in April, leaving behind a £571 million pensions black hole and sparking an investigation by MPs into its demise.

Attention will now turn to the role of well known businessman Sir Philip Green, who owned the chain for 15 years, and the man he sold it to for £1 last year, former bankrupt Dominic Chappell.

Fake £20 notes detected in use across parts of county

WARNINGS have been issued after a string of fake £20 notes were found circulating in east Kent.

The Scottish notes have been used in Canterbury, Dover and New Romney and police are warning the public to be extra vigilant.

Fake notes can be hard to spot and people are advised to check the feel of the paper, the raised print, metallic thread and watermark.

Retailers should also continue to use UV detector lights where available.

Investigating officer police constable Ben Crook said: "It is a criminal offence to hold on to or pass on counterfeit notes.

"Shopkeepers should not allow the note to go back into circulation. "We would urge everyone to be vigilant and check notes."

Warning over abnormal load on the Dartford Crossing

MOTORISTS using the Dartford Crossing over coming weekends are advised to look out for a series of slow-moving, abnormal loads that will be using the crossing and likely to cause delays as a result.

Three transformers are being moved overnight from Littlebrook Power Station to Thamesport on the Isle of Grain on the evenings of Saturday June 4, July 16 and July 24.

While the loads are at the crossing, traffic will be temporarily held for up to 30 minutes depending on the progress of the loads.

On each day the convoy is expected to reach the crossing by around 9pm and have cleared the area by 9.30pm.

Drivers planning journeys during these periods should allow extra time.



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Countryside Alliance praises PCC on gun funds

THE Countryside Alliance has congratulated Kent's police and crime commissioner Matthew Scott after he agreed £39,000 of new funding to clear the backlog in firearms licensing.

The Tory PCC took the move previously shunned by his predecessor, Ann Barnes. She had said the money would be better spent on extra police officers rather

than "subsidising someone's hobby".

Mr Scott has now ensured additional staff will be in place to clear the backlog and ensure a long term plan is in place to prevent further delays.

Countryside Alliance head of shooting campaigns Liam Stokes said: "Efficient firearms licensing is a vital service to the shooting community."



SUSPECT: Police point finger of blame

Did fox cubs chew through brake cables?

POLICE investigating damage caused to car brake lines in Tunbridge Wells say they believe foxes are to blame.

Between May 18-31 there have been six reports of brake lines being damaged in the St James and Langton Green areas.

Officers investigating called in a wildlife expert and they confirmed the damage has been caused by foxes.

In 2009, a similar investigation in West Wickham came to the same conclusion.

Foxes, especially cubs at this time of year, are known to rest under vehicles and can chew through pipes.

Insp Christian Mayers said: "Each of the incidents were quickly noticed by the driver, as they have attempted to drive off from being parked. No one has been injured as a result of this."

"These reports are very unusual and, as a precaution, I would encourage motorists to safely apply their brakes before they set off on a journey."

"Also, check your dashboard for a warning light. It is also a good idea to regularly inspect the underside of your vehicle"

"Finally, consider regularly washing your car to remove any scents left by foxes. There are also animal repellents available, which can be applied to vehicles in order to deter foxes."

High Court clears way for Virgin's £126m NHS deal to finally get started

By Luke May

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RICHARD Branson's Virgin Care has seen off a legal challenge giving it the green light to take over the running of health services across Swale, Gravesham and Dartford.

It was awarded a seven-year deal to take over the management of the NHS Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and NHS Swale CCG.

Worth an estimated £18 million a year, it was challenged by former holders and beaten bidders, the Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust (KCHFT) who claimed Virgin would not be able to start the contract on time.

It had been due to begin in April, but was delayed due to the legal scrap.

A spokeswoman from NHS Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley CCG and NHS Swale CCG said: "The High Court has lifted the suspension which now enables the contract with Virgin Care to be signed."



SUCCESS: Richard Branson

"In the forthcoming weeks the CCG will work with the new provider to reinstate the mobilisation plan and ensure the safe handover of services from KCHFT."

KCHFT chief executive Paul Bent-

ley said he was 'disappointed' that the suspension had been lifted.

He said: "It is only right that decisions to award multi-million pound NHS contracts should be subject to the highest scrutiny."

"Challenging this decision was not something we took lightly. We asked the north Kent CCGs for some more information about the procurement to confirm the contract was fairly awarded. This triggered an automatic suspension to the contract being signed. We are still waiting for information from the CCGs."

"While we are disappointed the automatic suspension has been lifted, we respect the court's decision. The case to hear whether the procurement was carried out correctly is yet to be heard and we hope that it will not be necessary when the information is provided."

The deal will see Virgin Care take over the running of the Sittingbourne Memorial Hospital, Sheppey Community Hospital, Livingstone Hospital in Dartford and Gravesham Hospital in Gravesend.

MP secures place in London Marathon

GILLINGHAM and Rainham MP Rehman Chishti has announced he is to run the London Marathon next year in support of friend and fellow Tory, Medway councillor Mike O'Brien.

Cllr O'Brien is currently under going cancer treatment, prompting Mr Chishti to run in order to raise funds for Cancer Research UK.

The Conservative MP said: "I was devastated when my dear friend Mike O'Brien was recently diagnosed with cancer and I want to ensure that research into the disease gets the support it deserves."

"I hope to raise thousands of pounds for this good cause and I'm delighted the charity has given me a place for next year's marathon."

Mr Chishti has already completed 12 half marathons for local good causes.

He hopes to join the 77 former and current MPs who have completed the route around the capital since the event started in 1981.

Donations can be made at www.justgiving.com/

Artefacts from 13th century seized in raid

HISTORICAL artefacts, some dating back to the 13th century, have been seized from a house in Sittingbourne as part of a police clampdown on illegal metal-detecting.

Medieval coins were among the items found at the property in Chalkwell Road.

The warrant was the first in Kent to be carried out under Operation Chronos – a national campaign in conjunction with Historic England to tackle the practice of 'nighthawking'.

Enquiries are ongoing and no arrests have been made at this stage. Insp Dave Smith said: "Nighthawking is where people go onto farmland, archaeological sites and other areas of interest to find and steal coins and other treasure for their historical and financial value."

"This practice permanently deprives the country of our heritage and is one we are keen to tackle shoulder-to-shoulder with Historic England."

It formed part of a host of police activity which covered a range of rural crimes from burglary to

Former Archbishop signs against Brexit

A FORMER Archbishop of Canterbury has warned against "isolation and erecting barriers" in a letter of support for keeping Britain in the EU.

Dr Rowan Williams was one of many faith leaders who has called on Britain to stay in the EU by urging "co-religionists and others to think about the implications of a leave vote for the things about which we are most passionate".

Signing in a personal capacity, the 37 signatories from across all major faiths stress the importance of integration and building bridges, whilst warning against Britain isolating itself and building barriers.

Other figures to have signed the letter include Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner, Principal Rabbi, Movement for Reform Judaism; Mona Siddiqui, professor of Islamic and inter-religious studies and assistant principal religion and society, University of Edinburgh; and Bharti Tailor, executive director, Hindu Forum in Europe.

The letter reads: "Faith is about integration and building bridges, not about isolation and erecting

Gun smuggling mastermind put behind bars for 35 years

By Emily Pennink

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

THE mastermind behind Britain's biggest known gun smuggling operation has been sentenced to 35 years for shipping £100,000 of weapons from the same source used in the Charlie Hebdo terror attack in Paris.

Harry Shilling from Swanley bragged "we now officially gangsters" after 22 assault rifles and nine Skorpion sub-machine guns from eastern Europe sailed up the River Medway from Boulogne in France.

The 26-year-old and Michael Defraime, 30, from Bexleyheath, were found guilty of gun smuggling and possessing firearms with intent to endanger life following a trial held at the Old Bailey amid almost unprecedented security.

Shilling was handed a sentence of 30 years in jail, plus five years on extended licence, while Defraime was given 27 years in jail, plus five years on extended licence.

Judge Michael Topolski QC told Shilling: "I'm entirely satisfied the truth is you were the man in charge of this carefully planned, well-funded and sophisticated organisation."

The "dangerous young man" had been motivated by a desire to "maintain, protect and expand" his drug business, the judge said.

The rest of the gang - skipper David Payne, 43, from Cuxton, Swanley's Richard Rye, 24,



CAUGHT: Gang were caught on camera as they off-loaded the guns

and Christopher Owen, 30, from Rochester, who had already pleaded guilty - also received jail sentences for their role in the "sophisticated" enterprise.

Payne was handed 19 years and six months, including five years on extended licence; Rye was sentenced to 19 years and three months, including five years on extended licence; and Owen, who was caught with two bullets in his pocket, received five years and four months in prison for his lesser role.

The judge told them: "It has been said that

it cannot be exaggerated that guns kill and maim, terrorise and intimidate and that's why criminals want them.

"That is why they use them and that's why they organise their importation, supply and distribution."

He said the operation could have caused carnage on a "truly horrifying scale", adding: "The firearms were genuine, fully automatic and in good condition. They were of high calibre. Some of the weapons were loaded and ready to be fired."

£3k raised to bring home missing roofer

SUPPORTERS have raised £3,000 to help bring home a Sittingbourne roofer who disappeared from his home six years ago before reappearing last month in a Spanish hospital.

Matthew Green, 32, needs specialist health care in order to return home which is prompting the fundraising drive.

His parents met him again for the first time last week - as reported in KoS last weekend.

Pub makes the grade in campaign to save it

THE Royal Oak pub on Cooling Road in Frindsbury, has been saved by a community campaign to have it declared a listed building.

More than 1,000 people signed a petition and it has now been given Grade II-listed status. A campaign to apply for funds to buy the pub for the community is now under way.

Register for Kent Test

REGISTRATION is now open for parents wanting their child to sit the Kent Test in September.

The exam, for youngsters starting Year Six later this year, judges whether pupils are suitable for consideration for a grammar school place when they move into secondary school.

Deadline for entries is July 1. To register online, log on to www.kent.gov.uk/ola.

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Ambulance trust chief quits after call handling fiasco

THE chief executive of the scandal-hit South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust has left "to pursue other interests".

Paul Sutton took an agreed leave of absence after a damning report in March found "fundamental failings" over a scheme to delay ambulances to patients by diverting calls.

Chairman Tony Thorne stepped down at that stage as pressure from regulatory body, Monitor, intensified.

The secret project was "high risk" and did not have approval from board members, the 111 NHS helpline or commissioners, and up to 20,000 patients had ambulances delayed.

A spokesperson said: "South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust announces chief executive Paul Sutton has now left the trust to pursue other interests.



"The trust would like to thank Paul for his contribution to the developments and achievements of the trust over the past 10 years.

"The process for finding a permanent replacement will start

immediately and will be subject to further announcements as appropriate.

"In the interim period, Geraint Davies will continue as acting chief executive."

Campaigners plan march before Shepway meeting

PLANS for a garden town in Shepway that could deliver up to 12,000 homes have been outlined further in a report published by the council - days before a crucial cabinet meeting.

The much-needed homes, jobs, schools and facilities have been earmarked for the Otterpool Park site, as the authority looks to drum up interest ahead of the meeting at 5pm next Wednesday where councillors will decide whether to make a formal expression of interest to government.

Leader of the council, David Monk, said: "It is the responsibility of each generation to provide for the coming generations - to enable them to be employed and to have a home.

"At the same time more jobs are needed. This proposal will deliver both. For this to happen, a planning process will take place during which we will actively engage with the people of Shepway."

However, the plans have been heavily scrutinised in recent weeks, with the Ukip opposition on the council revealing scepticism while the CPRE feared for the impact the development would have on the Kent Downs.

Meanwhile, the Otterpool Newtown Coalition scheduled a demonstration in protest to the plans for yesterday (Saturday).

Coordinator David Plumstead said: "I've been fighting Shepway council for over 30 years but on this occasion they've gone a step too far."

Diesel creates 15 jobs

FASHION brand Diesel is to create 15 jobs when it becomes the latest tenant at Ashford's McArthurGlen Designer Outlet.

It opens the doors of its new 1,500 square foot site on Thursday, June 16.

It joins the likes of Havaianas and Timberland which have recently opened on the site.

Cycle for Heroes event

MORE than 250 cyclists will pedal 100km to raise funds for injured serviceman in the Cycle 4 Heroes event starting and ending at Gillingham's Medway Park on June 25.

All money raised will go to the Help for Heroes charity. For details or to take part see www.icycleevents.co.uk.

Killer drunk driver jailed

DRUNK driver John Jolly, 25, from Canterbury, has been jailed for three years and banned for three more after the crash he was in killed his passenger, 19-year-old Stephin Thomas.

The crash occurred on May 22 last year in Canterbury Road, Herne Bay.

PM's visit to brewery

PRIME minister David Cameron paid a flying visit to Kent on Friday as part of his tour of the country whipping up support for the remain campaign for the EU.

He went to the Shepherd Neame brewery in Faversham where he fielded questions about the upcoming referendum.

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Disruption expected in Gravesend

2. Voting by hashtags?

Twitter research suggests we'll back Brexit

3. Canterbury flashers

Police unsure if four incidents are linked

The Essential Guide:



...to Manston Airport

Everything you need to know about plans to get planes flying in Thanet once again



FEATURED PHOTO GALLERY: An exhibition celebrating classic BBC TV sitcom *Only Fools and Horses* pulled in nearly 3,000 visitors over the course of its opening weekend as fans flocked to Dreamland, Margate. See page 27 for the full story

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Top Three Blogs



1. Rooney must not start

Why England's captain is holding us back

2. Time to take a step back?

Tales of gambling highs and lows

3. Don't tell the bride

It's always the same but we can't get enough

Results of the KoS Online Poll

Is a lorry park the best solution to Op Stack?

- 1 Yes, it needs to be at Stanford - 44%
- 2 Yes, but not at Stanford - 6%
- 3 No, we need multiple parks - 50%
- 4 Don't know - 0%

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Vile truth behind the nation's most prolific paedophile

Former Folkestone grammar student Richard Huckle will be sentenced on Monday for a string of sickening crimes against poor young Christian children living in Malaysia

By Emily Pennink

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

BRITAIN's worst paedophile planned to "mould" one of his victims into his "perfect wife" - so he could get away with abusing more children, a court heard.

Richard Huckle, 30, from Ashford, is facing multiple life sentences after he carried out horrific sex crimes against up to 200 children in Malaysia over nine years.

He has admitted an unprecedented number of sex offences against poor Christian girls and boys in Kuala Lumpur between the ages of six months to 12 years.

Ahead of his sentencing, Huckle told a psychiatrist he wanted to put "all the madness behind me" and seek out a South Indian woman.

He also blamed his crimes on "external influences", according to the report.

But prosecutor Brian O'Neill QC, pointed out a disturbing post Huckle made in 2013 on the dark web site TLZ - The Love Zone.

It it, he detailed how he had abused four girls from the same family and earmarked one of them to be his future wife.

Describing how he had "fallen in love" with South Asia, he wrote: "I

have gotten particularly close with one family whom I have known about six years.

"I have sexual contact with four of the girls in that family and though the family obviously does not approve it they try to work around it as they know I can be a potentially valuable asset to them in future."

On marrying one of the girls when she turns 18, he wrote: "I feel my situation could strongly benefit me in that my partner is still quite young and I have known her since she was seven and I can influence her young mind to mould her into the perfect wife.

"My ambition once married would be for our family to be like foster carers for children, temporary or long term."

He wanted to have children of his own but added he was "not a big fan of incest".

He went on: "With having such a long standing relationship with my wife and being over 10 years older than her I would hope I would be able to pacify and influence her into not reporting me as I would make it clear to her that she would lose her 'middle class lifestyle' if I got busted."

He added: "Marriage certainly is not suitable for a paedophile to a western woman (there are women who would be safe but they would be extremely unattractive) but you can

get away with it a lot more if you live in and marry a south Asian girl."

Earlier, the court heard how Huckle's parents were so horrified at what their son had done they begged police to take him away.

The freelance photographer began the abuse on a gap year to south east Asia at the age of 19, and masqueraded as a devout Christian and English teacher to gain the trust of his victims and their families. He went on to post a stream pictures and video of himself raping children which were shared worldwide on the dark web.

He even set up a crowd funding enterprise inviting other paedophiles to pay Bitcoins for access to more images.

Huckle wrote a paedophile manual called Paedophiles And Poverty: Child Lover Guide as well as a "Pedopoints ledger" in which he detailed rapes and various sex acts.

The manual was on an encrypted space on Huckle's laptop ready for publication on the "dark web" through a hyperlink.

His "Pedopoints" ledger was a private record of the children he had abused. He had made it a game of different types of indecent activities. Under the rules, he could not score for the same activity for the same child in the same week.

The ledger was also on an encrypted part of his laptop and he had



GUILTY: Ashford's Richard Huckle

written about the Pedopoints on a members only paedophile site called TLZ which has since been closed down.

Twenty-three children from mainly poor Christian families in Kuala Lumpur were identified in the 71 offences he pleaded guilty to, although it is believed Huckle abused up to 200 young victims.

The details can only now be reported because investigators had been granted a court order allowing time to get the material removed from the internet and protect the children from any future abuse.

Prosecutor Brian O'Neill QC told how Huckle targeted and groomed deprived children impressing them with his "relative wealth and status as a Westerner".

Huckle was so confident that he put together a paedophile guide on how to select victims and avoid detection, and bragged on abuse forums on the Dark Web about how one three-year-old girl was as loyal to him as a dog.

Acting on information, Huckle was arrested by the National Crime Agency when he touched down at Gatwick airport en route to spend Christmas at home with his family in 2014.

Mr O'Neill said Huckle was bailed to return to his parents' home after refusing investigators' questions.

The next day, his mother asked

him about the allegations and he admitted he had sex with children.

Mr O'Neill said: "His mother was extremely upset and angry. She and his father called the police and asked them to take their son away.

"Both have made witness statements in support of this prosecution."

Huckle has admitted 71 child sex offences, including multiple rapes, against 23 identified children aged between six months and 12 years old.

However, the NCA were not able to crack all the encrypted files on Huckle's computer which could contain indecent images of far more victims totalling up to 200.

An NSPCC spokesman said: "There is no doubt Huckle is an incredibly dangerous paedophile who must be kept away from children at all costs.

"His delight in abusing babies and toddlers - which he boasted about on the internet - shows the depths of his warped depravity.

"This case highlights the urgent need for a global effort to crack down on those who use the web to exploit and hurt vulnerable youngsters.

"And internet service providers must take responsibility to cleanse the web of these images and prevent them from being viewed in the first place."

Huckle will be sentenced at the Old Bailey by Judge Peter Rook QC.



MALAYSIA: Huckle abused children as young as six months old

Stack speed seized upon by transport committee

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

A LEADING campaigner against plans to build a lorry park the size of Disneyland as a long-term solution to Operation Stack has welcomed criticism of the proposals by the Commons' transport committee.

Some £250million was pledged by the chancellor last year to build a permanent lorry park near Stanford at junction 11 of the M20, capable of holding almost 4,000 large goods vehicles.

It is aimed to ease problems which caused havoc last summer when problems at the ports and Eurotunnel terminal caused a backlog of HGVs which are then forced to park on the M20, closing stretches of the motorway and putting huge strain on surrounding roads.

In a report published on Wednesday, the committee said the government is right to seek a solution to the level of disruption caused by Stack, but more should be done to demonstrate that the lorry park will deliver as a solution.

Matthew Webb, chairman of Stanford Parish Council, who has long campaigned against the plans, said he was delighted to read the report and hear his thoughts echoed.

He told KoS: "It's very positive and I'm very pleased to see that finally a body on a national level such as the transport committee has said what we have been saying for a long time."

"I wouldn't say we've been vilified, but certainly participants in the debate have called us Nimbys [Not In My Back Yard campaigners] but we're not Nimbys, there's so much more to it than that."

"We've already got a lorry park [at Stop 24] and we wouldn't be against that being made larger, but one huge lorry park is not the best working solution."

"The report supports every criticism of it that we have made, but the main one is simply that there are not enough facts."

Cllr Webb has given evidence at a number of government meetings in Westminster, and told the transport committee in March that the environmental impact of a lorry park in Stanford would be devastating to the local community.

He instead suggested a series of smaller parks, highlighting the fact that a fire or similar incident at one single park would immediately put trucks back on the roads.

He added: "I think this report will be listened to by government, but the question is to what degree will it be acted on?"

"It's one thing to put down the little man from Stanford, it's another to



HOPE: Matthew Webb of Stanford Parish Council hopes the plans will now be re-examined

dismiss the findings of a select committee.

"We wait and see the extent to which they go away and re-think the plans."

"In times of austerity, a minister who goes and spends £250m while ignoring the advice of the transport committee is a foolish one."

The report found that the decision to proceed was rushed in reaction to the events of the summer of 2015 when Stack was used longer than ever before due to a perfect storm of French workers striking to block ferry traffic and migrants invading Eurotunnel to prevent trains from travelling under the Channel.

The committee called on transport ministers to demonstrate the necessity of building the lorry park, including the cost-benefit ratios of alternative solutions and whether the park is proportionate and appropriate to the scale and frequency of disruption.

It also stressed the need to factor in environmental and social costs on the locality, economic benefits and the long-term costs of operating, maintaining, renewing and, eventually, decommissioning the lorry park.

Launching the report, chair of the committee, Louise Ellman said: "The disruption caused by Operation Stack affects many people in Kent but this is not just a local issue."

"The routes to Dover and Folkestone are important nationally – they carry more than 80 per cent of the road freight entering or leaving the UK."

"The government has settled on a lorry park as the best solution but what they are proposing is on a vast scale and could cost up to a quarter of a billion pounds."

"Ministers need to do more in order to justify this spending and it should do more to demonstrate why a lorry park roughly the size of Disneyland in California is better than the alternatives we heard about

during our inquiry."

"We are not saying that the government should not press ahead with its proposal, only that it has more work to do to persuade us of the business case for this investment."

Ian Pointon, chairman of the Kent Police Federation, rejected the suggestion that the process has been rushed, instead believing that a solution was 30 years in the making.

"To say that we have reached this hastily is ridiculous," he told us.

"It might be hasty for some kind of snail but we have not rushed this, we've done quite the opposite."

Dover MP Charlie Elphicke agreed by tweeting that campaigning had gone on for a decade, while Damian Collins, MP for Folkestone and Hythe added: "We must proceed at pace with a solution. We've spent years looking at this and the lorry park is the best option."

"I know a magician won Britain's Got Talent, but I suspect even him working alongside Dynamo wouldn't make those lorries disappear, so we've got to find some way of getting them off the road," Mr Pointon added.

"I understand the objections and if I was asked if I wanted a huge lorry park at the bottom of my garden, I'd probably say no, and there are a lot of logistical issues that need to be considered."

"It's not a case of laying some tarmac over the countryside, you need to make sure the drivers have got the proper facilities available as well."

Similarly, the Tunbridge Wells-based Freight Transport Association feared the findings of the report could prolong the misery of Kent residents.

Malcolm Bingham, head of road network management policy, said: "There needs to be a managed flow of traffic to the port and tunnel. If a large lorry area is the answer, then the residents of Kent deserve an explanation of what the need is and how it will work."

"Equally if that is not the solution, any alternatives need to be fully explored."

"We want to keep the wheels of industry turning so it is essential to manage the impact of cross-Channel disruption in the best possible way and involve the logistics industry in the creation of the solution."

It was announced last week that a £130m contract for the construction of the park was awarded to international infrastructure group, Balfour Beatty.

Debbie Burton of the Smarter Options than Stanford for Kent group opposed to the lorry park said: "It just seems the process is not being followed."

"We have been advised of nothing, yet it appears to be a done deal - I have seen plans from Balfour Beatty dating back to last October."

A spokesperson for the Department for Transport (DfT) said: "It is right that we find a permanent solution and we're determined to keep Kent moving."

"That is why up to £250m was made available to build a lorry park which could take lorries off the county's roads in the event of disruption."

"Highways England received more than 1,000 responses to its public consultation on this issue and will announce a decision on the preferred site soon."

The DfT says the next step is for the secretary of state to make an announcement on the way forward in summer 2016.

Highways England would hold a further six week consultation on a preferred site before construction starts.

Last month, roads minister Andrew Jones confirmed in a letter to Faversham and Mid Kent MP Helen Whately that Manston Airport would be used as a temporary solution should Stack come into force.

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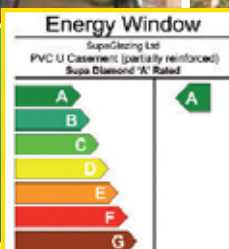
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Is concept of social mobility in our selective system a myth?

Grammar schools are justified by claims they allow those from all backgrounds to aspire to top grades. But is that really the case anymore? Kent County Council is taking steps this week in a bid to ensure it once again becomes a reality

By Chris Britcher

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THE county's decision to stick with a selective school system while almost all other authorities dismissed theirs, is as much down to the county's historic Conservative rulers than any parental pressure.

While it is nigh on impossible not to argue that the 11-plus system is one that labels pupils as 'failures' at a delicate and early stage in their schooling, it is also not hard to understand why parents will fight tooth and nail to get their son and daughter into one of them.

Regardless of political leaning, the desire to get your child through the Kent Test and in with a chance of mixing it with the so-called academic elite is hard to resist. After all, all parents want the very best for their children.

But by creaming off the most talented and proclaiming them the best, it delivers a damaging blow to the county's non-selectives. With nigh on the top 30 per cent removed, many struggle to hit exam grade targets.

Yet the justification of keeping the selective system in place is that it promotes social mobility.

Increasingly, however, that appears to be an aspiration rather than a reality.

And Kent County Council, it seems, is getting concerned as to just how the grammar places are distributed.

Last week it published a draft report into a series of recommendations it wanted to take to ensure selective places were not so dominated by middle class pupils with parents capable of

financing coaching to help them secure the pass mark in the Kent Test.

Tomorrow (Monday) a nine-strong, cross-party select committee will meet to rubber-stamp the document which will, in turn, be presented to both the cabinet later this month and full council in July.

It could signal one of the most significant changes in admission procedure for years and address mounting concerns those from poorer financial backgrounds are at a disadvantage.

The group is being led by county councillor Jenny Whittle. She said: "The remit of this committee focuses on what can be done to improve the representation of children from disadvantaged backgrounds in grammar schools so that they too can benefit from a selective education if it is appropriate for them.

"That just 57 per cent of high ability children in receipt of pupil premium [additional funding for those from a disadvantaged background] in Kent attend a grammar school, compared to 79 per cent of similar ability children not eligible for pupil premium, highlights that concerted action needs to be taken to ensure that more academically able children from poorer backgrounds have the same access to selective education as their more affluent peers.

"Our research has found that strong partnerships between schools and parents, and between primary and secondary schools – and in the context of this committee's report, grammar schools – are essential to ensure that bright children from poorer backgrounds are identified early to apply to take the Kent Test and be properly supported through the process, including at the appeals stage."

Education consultant and a former grammar school head teacher, Peter Read, was consulted as part of the committee's deliberations.

He explained: "There is clear evidence there are real barriers to progression for children on pupil premium from primary schools to grammars. Sadly, there is also too much evidence that children in primaries whose headteachers oppose selective education, are discriminated against with regard to grammar school admission. I regularly talk with families where there is no encouragement or advice given for able children by the school, no headteacher assessments [appeals] and no support at appeal, so they are massively disadvantaged by their schools. It is a disgrace that such teachers use their personal opinions to damage the futures of children they should be nurturing.

"Grammar schools need to play their part in



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MEETING: County Hall will host a gathering of the select committee to discuss the findings of a report into grammar admissions. Joanne Bartley, below left, of Kent Education Network, believes it does not go far enough.

this and, whilst many are building up good relationships with primary schools, working to understand the barriers, and making themselves more approachable, others remain in their ivory towers with expensive uniforms and other trappings that can be very off-putting.

"There are many excellent ideas in the recommendations, and examples of good practice already in place, but KCC has now lost many of its powers to bring about change. With good will and determination on all sides, there is much that can be achieved, with children's life chances being enhanced through the social mobility the system

ought and must encourage."

But critics of the selective system say it doesn't go far enough.

Joanne Bartley, chair of Kent Education Network said: "We do not believe the commission's draft report goes anywhere near solving the problem.

"The issue is clear. On average, disadvantaged pupils make up 27 per cent of the total number on roll in non-selective schools, while the equivalent figure in grammar schools is six per cent. The fact a commission was needed to examine the problem itself disproves the myth that a selective system improves social mobility.

The report is a refreshingly honest attempt to examine the problem, and we agree with its conclusion that 'current access to grammar schools is not solely based on academic ability but is impacted by family income'.

"While recognising that family wealth determines the future of most of our children, the commission admits it can only make suggestions, lacking as it does the power to impose any meaningful solutions. Furthermore, in the unlikely event that all 16 of the commission's recommendations were to be adopted, there would be only a slight increase in the number of disad-

vantaged children going to grammar schools. It does not face up to the problem of widespread coaching and recent attempts to make it 'un-coachable' appear to have failed."

Adds Cllr Whittle: "The educational landscape is changing rapidly with increasing numbers of schools becoming academies. As such, the recommendations are just that – none of them can be imposed on schools. We believe, however, that KCC, primary and grammar schools have a moral responsibility to work together to support the most academically able children from disadvantaged backgrounds to access grammar schools."

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School told it DID make vote mistake

As KoS has reported extensively in recent weeks, the row over plans to become an academy at a Canterbury grammar school is threatening to dethrone head Jane Robinson, right. Now KCC has confirmed there were problems with the process meaning governors will have to vote again on plans

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

A SENIOR Kent County Council executive has confirmed there were breaches of procedure in a Kent grammar school's attempt to become an academy. Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School (SLGGS) has come under intense scrutiny after pushing ahead with plans to become what is known as a multi academy trust (MAT) in order to allow it to also take over struggling Sturry school the Spires Academy.

Started in November, parents have complained of a lack of information and transparency in the process. It has led to pressure on head teacher Jane Robinson - who has spearheaded the proposals - and the governing body.

In remarkable scenes, pupils staged

a walkout in protest at the academisation plans and teachers are threatening to strike.

Now, after an investigation by Kent County Council, Patrick Leeson, corporate director for education and young people's services, has written to parents confirming there were issues - although not enough to force the process to start again.

The consultation plan has already been pushed back as a result of the backlash.

In the letter, Mr Leeson said: "KCC has already investigated one specific issue and has informed the governing body that one governor was not eligible to vote at the meeting on November 25, 2015, although this did not materially affect the outcome of the votes taken at that meeting.

"KCC has sought further legal advice on this matter in light of a

number of the complaints received, and can now confirm that there were other procedural shortcomings at the full governing body meeting on November 25 which breached the school governance (roles, procedures and allowances) (England) regulations 2013.

"Two governors with a conflict of interest did not remove themselves from the meeting at the appropriate time contrary to the regulations and indeed voted on one of the two votes taken, which may have been contrary to the regulations.

"Consequently, it has been agreed the governing body will meet again without those who have a conflict of interest being present for the parts of the meeting to which the conflict applies.

"Those with a conflict of interest will not be permitted to vote on matters to which the conflict applies. The



STRAIN:
SLGGS head Jane Robinson is still facing a fight to stay in her post

governing body will then vote upon whether or not they wish to confirm the decisions taken at the November 25 meeting to apply for academy status and to form a MAT including the Spires Academy.

"If the governing body does confirm those decisions, they will then go on to consider the outcome of the extended consultation process before making a final decision as to whether they should enter into a funding agreement with the secretary of state to become an academy.

"At their meeting the governors should have available to them all writ-

ten information which was originally considered on the pros and cons of the academisation process. They should also have available to them (if they affirm the November 25 votes) the responses to the extended consultation process, which they should consider before making their final decision.

"Our intention has always been to see a transparent consultation process whereby all parents, staff and students have the opportunity to express their views."

A public meeting will take place at the school on June 8 to further discuss the proposals.

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Dr Claassen says, "Most patients normally have dental implants to stabilise loose and uncomfortable dentures or to replace embarrassing missing teeth. Having fixed teeth again means that they can eat and enjoy the food they want and have the confidence to smile in family photos again."

PRGF is 100% Natural

The system is the magic solution that helps to speed up the healing process after the procedure, promoting our own unique healing factors to burst into action. Using the revolutionary PRGF system also increases the success rate.

For the first time ever Hanover House Dental Practice are offering the PRGF system completely free of charge when a dental implant is placed. Normally this amazing new treatment would cost £350.00 but for a limited period only Dr Claassen is offering it for FREE!

Clinical Results

In a study of 1391 dental implant placements using PRGF, the success rate was 99.6%. This shows just how special PRGF is, and as our free introductory gift to you, Dr Claassen wants to provide it free of charge - but not for long. In fact, you only have until Tuesday 14th June 2016 to take up this offer!

Patients who have osteoporosis often receive medication to strengthen their bones. Unfortunately, in some cases it can lead to the opposite - impaired healing of bone structure. PRGF is excellent for patients potentially at risk

of dental implant failure, shortening the time it takes for the body to accept your implants.

The Benefits

There are many benefits when a patient chooses to have dental implants and using the PRGF system only increases those benefits...

Below are just a few;

1. Faster healing time; Less down time
2. Reduced pain and swelling
3. No one will know unless you want them too!
4. Natural healing from your healing factors
5. Get back your quality of life

How it works

PRGF - Plasma Rich Growth Factor is a 100% natural product specific and unique to each patient. A small amount of blood is placed in a centrifuge and separated in different layers. Only the parts, rich in growth factors are then used and applied onto the implant and the surrounding areas in the mouth.

In the several years PRGF have been used in different medical fields there has never been a reported side effect.

What people say

"Pieter worked painstakingly to achieve the perfect finish. The dental implants have given me back my smile and confidence and I no longer have to worry about what I eat"

Mrs. P. Mahoney - Speldhurst

"Having dental implants was well worth the effort and the difference was extraordinary, making it the best decision I ever made. I used to be self-conscious about my teeth. I wouldn't eat in public in case my dentures fell out and I hated how they felt in my mouth. Since having dental implants I am so much happier. I can eat what I want, when I want, including apples and I am much more confident. Even my friends have commented on how happy and relaxed I look."

Stephen Barnham - Tonbridge

Ken, a patients of Dr Claassen at Hanover House Dental Practice says... *"I wasn't certain about going down this route but now feel SMILES better!"* which is evident in his before and after treatment photos.



■ Mr Ken Winch BEFORE Treatment



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IDS: Kent knows the problems first hand so you must vote leave

Writing exclusively for Kent on Sunday, the former Conservative leader and prominent campaigner for Britain to leave the European Union, Iain Duncan Smith, explains why he believes we're better off voting out on June 23 and how the county knows better than most of the problems that are caused.

If there's one thing I care about in this referendum, it is taking back control of our right as a nation to decide who can live and work in this country.

As a member of the European Union, Britain has lost control over its borders.

Today anyone who is a member of the EU, even if they have a criminal record, has the right to come to Britain. And that may not matter much to the politicians in Westminster or the big businesses in the City, but it matters to people in Kent. As the leader of Kent County Council said recently, "The pressure is growing in coastal communities. I think we need government to give us help in these townships in some wards."

There is nothing socially just about uncontrolled immigration. Having an open door to almost 500 million people makes it impossible for our government to plan for the schools, hospitals and homes that we need. And it is people in Kent who are some of the biggest losers from this.

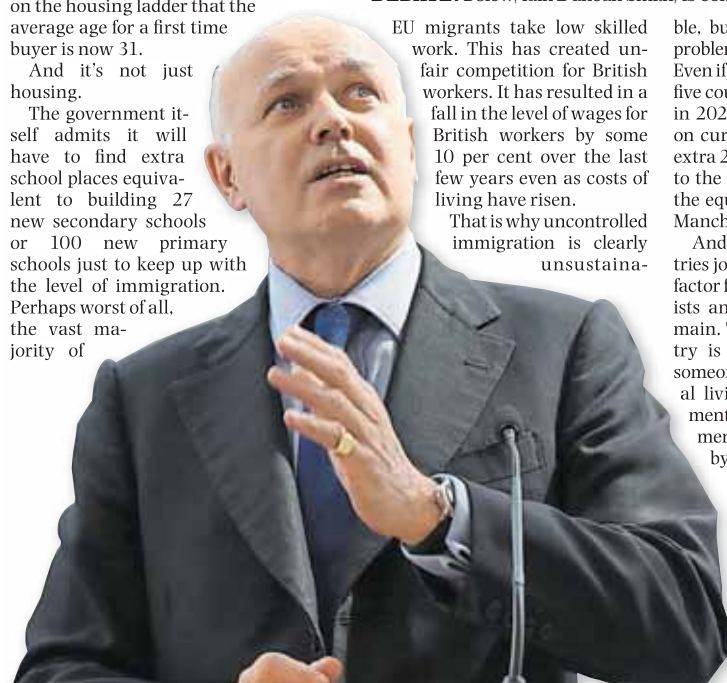
I have always wanted young people to have the opportunity of owning their own home, but over the last 15 years, immigration has created two thirds of the additional households in the UK. In fact we need to build around 240 houses every day for the next 20 years just to be able to cope with increased demand from future migration. Such is the struggle to get on the housing ladder that the average age for a first time buyer is now 31.

And it's not just housing.

The government itself admits it will have to find extra school places equivalent to building 27 new secondary schools or 100 new primary schools just to keep up with the level of immigration. Perhaps worst of all, the vast majority of



DEBATE: Below, Iain Duncan Smith, is convinced remaining in the EU will have a detrimental effect on Britain going forward



EU migrants take low skilled work. This has created unfair competition for British workers. It has resulted in a fall in the level of wages for British workers by some 10 per cent over the last few years even as costs of living have risen.

That is why uncontrolled immigration is clearly unsustainable

ble, but unless we leave the EU this problem will get worse, not better. Even if we ignore the fact that a further five countries expected to enter the EU in 2020, including Turkey, just based on current levels of net migration an extra 2.58 million people will be added to the UK population by 2030. That's the equivalent of five cities the size of Manchester entering the UK.

And regardless how many countries join the EU in the future, the pull factor for current migrants already exists and will only increase if we remain. The average wage in this country is more than six times that of someone's in Bulgaria and the national living wage, one of this government's most far-sighted achievements, is due to rise to around £9 by 2020.

The fact that people can move freely across Europe poses great problems for our national security. Under the European Court of Justice, our government cannot even require migrants from other EU states to have a permit issued by UK authorities, despite the fact that permits from

other EU countries are systematically forged. This will make it easier for terrorists to enter the UK using forged documents – and it will be the people of Kent who will be forced to bear the brunt of that injustice.

But it's not just about the number of people – having an immigration system that favours one group of people is simply unfair.

Because of our open border with the EU, skilled workers from outside the EU are being turned away in an attempt to control the overall level of migration.

This is not only discriminatory, it means that our businesses and our economy miss out on talented people from outside the EU, many of whom share a history and language with us as members of the Commonwealth – be that a qualified engineer from India or a doctor from Jamaica.

I can think of no self-governing country that would willingly sacrifice its border, many of its laws, vast sums of its money and much of its democracy in order to trade with neighbouring countries. So why on earth would we want to remain in a system that has required exactly that?

And why would we want to remain inside a system that makes it harder for our small businesses to grow and create jobs for people here in Kent?

We are, after all, a nation of entrepreneurs – today small businesses employ more than 15 million people in our country. But despite the fact that just six per cent of UK firms actually trade with the EU, all of our businesses must comply with EU rules and regulations costing £600 million every week. It is not the jobs of a trading block to decide what laws a country should have to follow. It should be up to us, the British people, to decide.

In just a few weeks' time we have once in a lifetime opportunity to take back control of our country – to control our borders and have a fair immigration system, to spend our money on our priorities like the NHS, to restore real democracy to our country and to re-engage and trade with the rest of the world.

It is a vision of a fairer, more secure and more prosperous Britain. A Britain that says yes to Europe, but no to the European Union. Let's vote for our own British independence day on June 23.

United we stand to remain in EU

Two of the county's most significant education providers have united to call for the county to remain within the European Union when we take to the polls on June 23. In an article written for Kent on Sunday, **Professor Dame Julia Goodfellow**, vice-chancellor of the University of Kent, and **Professor Rama Thirunamachandran**, vice-chancellor and principal of Canterbury Christ Church University explain why the nation stands to lose out if we opt to withdraw at this month's referendum.

FOR over 1,400 years, Canterbury has been a centre of learning.

In that sweep of history, Canterbury Christ Church University and the University of Kent are relative newcomers. But for over 50 years we have both made higher education an inextricable part of the city. And we have campuses across the county – Medway, Broadstairs, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells.

We are the children of far-sighted leadership in Kent in the 1960s and we are in turn proud of the contribution our staff and students make to the social, sporting and cultural life of our communities. We are pleased, too, that visitors are able to make use of our facilities, such as the Sidney Cooper Art Gallery, the Gulbenkian Theatre and the Colyer Fergusson Concert Hall.

Our two universities are major businesses. We provide directly or indirectly about one in six of the jobs in Canterbury. The conference trade outside of

term time generates income for the local economy. Our combined economic impact across the south east amounts to over £1bn every year.

On June 23, the nation will take its most important political decision in a generation. The remain and leave campaigns have each raised a wide range of issues to be factored into the decision. But the leaders of the nation's universities have made it clear that membership of the European Union is overwhelmingly in the interests of higher education. We want to explain why.

Universities are about the future. We train the scientists, nurses, teachers, lawyers, architects, pharmacists and other graduates upon which our nation's prosperity depends.

The European Union provides opportunities for our students and researchers to experience living and working in continental Europe. And it helps to bring European students to Kent and Medway – they in turn con-



REMAIN: Above, University of Kent

tribute over £30m a year to the local economy. Working alongside other European students provides the opportunities to build networks and absorb other languages and cultures. These are the experiences that British students need to become the global leaders of tomorrow.

Our research provides the insights that help our economy and our society to grow and develop. Most of the best research is done by the best minds col-

laborating in teams working across borders. EU frameworks, programmes and funding support collaboration.

Being in the EU makes it easier for UK universities to attract talented staff from across Europe. They contribute significantly to university teaching, world class research and cultural and academic life.

Inside the EU – the world's largest block of knowledge – we can have a say in shaping cross border research in a



way that would be impossible if we were not a member.

As university leaders we welcome debate. At our universities, we are each encouraging discussion and the free expression of ideas across all issues.

Everyone will have their own views on the bigger picture. We ourselves believe that continued membership of the European Union makes the United Kingdom's outstanding universities even stronger.

Regardless of their own individual views, we will be encouraging all our students to register and to exercise their democratic right to vote. It is their future.



HASTINGS HIDDEN GEM

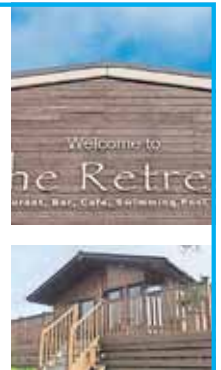
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WIN! Tickets to the Champions of Rock

The magic of Queen and Meat Loaf will be celebrated on stage in Dartford - and you can be there in our competition

THEY are two of the rock world's most enduring acts and to celebrate careers of non-stop smash hit records, Dartford's Orchard Theatre will be hosting a very special tribute night to the combined talents of Queen and Meat Loaf.

Champions of Rock will sweep into the theatre of June 23 - and you can be there for free to soak up the sensational atmosphere by entering our great competition.

The critically-acclaimed stage show has been celebrating the 40th anniversary of Queen's Bohemian Rhapsody with an extra-special concert show that also features the UK's number one Meat Loaf revue.

Show promoter Michael Taylor, of Hadleigh-based Easy Theatres, says the classic song will climax an evening of hit songs from two legendary artists celebrated for their live performances. He explained: "It will be an unforgettable night that superbly recreates the fun, musicianship and showmanship of Queen's famed live performances.

"It's a chance to join the ultimate



musical journey through the decades."

The show promises to recreate the time when Queen reigned supreme, releasing chart-topping singles We are the Champions, We Will Rock You, A Kind of Magic, Crazy Little Thing Called Love, I Want to Break Free, Another One Bites the Dust and, of course, Bohemian Rhapsody.

Special guests, Terry Nash's acclaimed Meat Loaf revue, add to the spectacle with breath-taking performances of Bat Out of Hell, Dead Ringer for Love, I'd Do Anything for Love and It's All Coming Back to Me Now.

We have six pairs of tickets to the

show which you can win by answering the simple question below.

But don't fret if you don't win - tickets, priced from £19.50 to £27.50 are available to buy from the theatre's box office on 01322 220000 or, alternatively, see www.orchardtheatre.co.uk.

Q. Who was lead singer of Queen?

A. Freddie Mercury

B. Bryan Adams

C. Adam Ant

Terms and conditions:

To enter text KENT followed by ROCK and your answer then your first name, surname address and



MAGIC: A tribute to Freddie Mercury and Queen and Meat Loaf

postcode to 67000, e.g. KENT ROCK C JOHN SMITH 2 THE STREET, TOWN, DV2 2GT. Winners will be selected from all correct entries. The promoter's decision is final. Usual terms and conditions apply. Please note if you should enter after the closing deadline of Tuesday 14th June 2016, your entry will not be valid, but you still may be charged.

Texts cost your standard network rate, SMS Services are provided by Text Local. Helpline: 01244 752299. Alternatively enter by post to Champions of Rock Competition, Archant KOS Media, Suite 104 Kent House, Station Road, Ashford, Kent TN23 1PP including your answer, name, address, postcode and contact telephone number.

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The not-so-fast food making its way - slowly - to your table

Meet snail farmer Helen Howard from Littlebourne whose business has grown over the last ten years to supply some of the country's top chefs in a rare delicacy

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

OUR county is justly proud of its extensive range of fresh produce grown or nurtured on our fields and farms.

From soft fruits and vegetables to mouthwatering meats and all the bounty from our coastline, we are rich in what we produce.

But to the long line of items being produced we can now add a certain je ne sais quoi - because after producing sparkling wines to give the French producers a run for their money, now we're farming that traditional delicacy of our continental cousins - snails - too.

Produced and shipped out to some of London's top restaurants, producers are climbing the slippery slope to success.

From a modest start, Helen Howard now runs H&HR Escargots in Littlebourne, near Canterbury.

They were once a major food group in the country, but over the centuries,



they faded from favour and are now regarded as an almost French-only menu item.

That doesn't mean you should dash out to the garden with fork and shovel in hand, but edible snails are available in Britain, so long as you pick the right ones.

Most Brits are somewhat squeamish about putting a cooked snail in their mouth, but Mrs Howard says

they are genuinely delicious.

After all, it's not just the French who treat them with the respect they deserve. The populations of Singapore, and even Spain and Portugal are partial to a nice snail in their cooking pot.

But Britain remains steadfastly anti-snail, but Mrs Howard, the heli-culturalist, is determined to change all that.

She set up her firm a decade ago and has seen it grow somewhat faster than a snail's top speed ever since and now supplies some leading chefs across Britain.

She told us: "Currently I am selling almost 1,000 a week at £35 per kilo upwards, plus delivery which is either courier or post. The nice lady at the Post Office doesn't mind, so long as she can't hear them in the box."

It was a modest start for the former biology teacher.

She said it all started by accident when her daughter went to agricultural college. She was made redundant by Kent County Council and wanted something to tie in with her daughter's studies, but didn't completely take over the house or require land.

After an internet search, snails it was.

She said: "I went on a day course with a farmer in the west country and from there started off."

"Initially I was cold-calling restaurants around here which was really hard work at first."

"Gradually and slowly I managed

to get a couple of regular customers and word of mouth helped from there.

"I supply Kent lad Allan Pickett at his London restaurant Piquet and he has helped enormously in spreading the word about me."

"We only send out live snails; chefs like to get them that way, so they know no one has been messing with them by preparing them in a



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HISTORY: Helen Howard says snails were brought here by the Romans and are part of our cultural history. Pictures: Paul Bennett

way they don't approve of."

She said snails are actually part of our cultural heritage, albeit somewhat forgotten now.

"The Romans brought them here a couple of thousand years ago and they were eaten by monks during Lent fast days because they were regarded as fish, or rather wallfish."

She raises *Helix aspersa maxima*

and *Helix aspersa muller*, which are not exactly common in your garden.

Starting in the back room of her home, the babies are eventually transferred to pens outside where the main problem is protecting them against predators.

Mrs Howard said: "Just about every species of wildlife in the UK eats snails, so keeping safe can be tough.

Feeding is from apples, cabbage, cherries and plums.

"They do like to breed naturally and as they are hermaphrodite all of them can lay eggs. They know what to do instinctively, so getting them to breed needs to interaction from me. They just get on with it.

"I know they are fully ready for market because the edge of their shell

starts to turn up like the brim of a hat."

Her reputation has soared in recent years and has even made appearances on the BBC's Great British Menu and ITV's The Alan Titchmarsh Show.

"I do my own training courses now for people who want to start their own snail farms," she said.

"I had one woman from Nigeria who was telling me the biggest prob-

lems she had at home was ants. At least we don't have serious problems from those over here."

As for the health benefits of wolfing down a few snails, she added: "They are packed full of protein, minerals and vitamins.

"We love seafood in the UK and if you cook a snail properly, they have a lovely soft texture."

■ For more information, visit the website www.hrh-escargots.co.uk



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BOUVERIE PLACE



Tug of war over airport's future continues as plans submitted

It swung the vote for Ukip in last May's local elections, and divides the population of Thanet. But it seems any hopes of seeing planes back at Manston are fading after development plans push ahead

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

THE future of Manston Airport appears no closer to being solved as three separate parties accelerate their respective plans for the site.

Stone Hill Park Ltd, which owns the site, intends to transform it into a mixed-use space, which would feature some 2,500 homes as well as leisure and commercial zones.

It is, however, a development fiercely opposed by those who refuse to entertain the prospect of the site no longer being used as a commercial airport.

The firm, which is also behind the Discovery Park site in Sandwich, officially submitted a planning application for the proposals to Thanet District Council on Tuesday.

Ray Mallon, spokesperson for Stone Hill Park, said: "We have carried out extensive consultation with local people and organisations and the feedback has helped shape the scheme that has now been submitted.

"The application outlines a carefully designed, mixed use site which is sympathetic to existing settlements and preserves the heritage of the former Manston airfield.

"The development will bring much needed jobs, homes, leisure and community facilities to east Kent, as well as a multi-million pound boost to the local economy and local public bodies."

To date more than £1.4m has been invested in preparing the scheme, with a project team that includes some of the most experienced in their field, including global planning and property consultants, Billfinger GVA and master planners PlanIt.

Engineering and ecology specialists, WSP, travel advisors AECOM, lawyers Herbert, Smith Freehills, PR consultants Pillory Barn and a number of specialists dealing with

specific elements of the scheme, including archaeology and heritage have also been appointed.

Its progress has been slow and steady. And it's looking increasingly more likely to emerge as the future vision for the hugely controversial Thanet site.

Local campaigners have registered significant opposition to the plans in recent months, with community groups and MPs rallying to help get planes flying from Manston once again.

It appears their best bet is the American investment firm RiverOak, which previously attempted to partner with the council and acquire the site through a compulsory purchase order (CPO). But the authority failed to get the assurances and details which were essential for any such move to go ahead.

RiverOak still insists it intends to purchase the site and return it to a functioning airport, and this week continued preparations to launch its own development consent order (DCO) by appointing a 'professional team' of legal, aviation, planning, environmental impact, public affairs and public relations specialists, to support its application.

A DCO is an order that helps secure permission for developments categorised as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects. It can include the right for compulsory purchase of land.

The team is led by London law firm Bircham Dyson Bell (BDB), which specialises in DCOs and offers one of the largest and most experienced teams of its kind in the UK.

To date they have acted for the promoters of 11 successfully granted DCOs with a 12th in progress, and they have acted, or are acting for, third parties affected by a further 12.

Engineering consultancy Amec Foster Wheeler will lead on preparation of a detailed environmental impact assessment (EIA) covering issues ranging from noise, air and water quality to transport impact and historic environment.

Amec Foster Wheeler has particular experience in delivering EIAs and consents for DCO applications and other large infrastructure projects, including some of the largest and most high-profile projects such as the third runway proposals at Heathrow Airport, which will become a DCO project should it gain government support.

Northpoint Aviation Consultancy continues to support RiverOak in all aspects of the airport investment appraisal, forecasting, business planning and due diligence and they are

joined by Viscount Aviation, Azimuth Consulting, whose focus will be the further development of a detailed demand and capacity study of the UK air freight market, and Osprey.

The latter will support the team on airspace issues relating to the CAA licensing process which runs in parallel to the DCO application.

In addition, Mouchel will provide land referencing services to the project.

RiverOak hopes to make the site a major international centre for air freight, a reliever for the major airports of London, an extensive aircraft recycling and engineering facility, a base for at least one passenger carrier, a flight training school and a fixed base operation for executive travel.

Spokesperson George Yerrall said: "We have had productive initial meetings with the planning inspectorate, covering a range of issues relevant to RiverOak's proposed application.

"We have now put in place a very strong and experienced team of aviation and planning experts to support us as we move further forward through the process.

"Our intention is to consult widely with the community in east Kent and beyond to ensure we hear and can respond to the hopes, aspirations and concerns of people living across the region as part of our proposals.

"Manston has a strong case to be considered a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project as it offers much-needed runway capacity in the south east of England and is a re-

source that should be working hard on behalf of the country, not simply left derelict to be bulldozed for housing and light industrial use that is already well provided for in the local area."

Thanet District Council last week abandoned its hunt for an indemnity partner to launch a CPO after a soft marketing exercise failed to bear fruit.

However, a third possible outcome has also arisen, after the council revealed in a report there were parties interested in approaching Stone Hill Park to negotiate a purchase of the land with the intention of getting planes back on the runway – one of which was backed by £150m in sovereign wealth funds.

"The debate over the future of this site has caused confusion and, at times, distress for local people – as well as economic uncertainty for the area," Mr Mallon added.

"Repeated studies and market testing exercises have shown that aviation is not feasible on this site.

"It's now time for the council to focus on what is feasible and best for the future of this area.

"For the avoidance of any doubt, Stone Hill Park has been approached by one party who are exploring numerous possible infrastructure projects across the country and assessing which, if any, are feasible.

"I would describe them as credible speculators, exploring, with an open mind, the possibility of aviation use on the site.

"We have held one meeting with them during which the feasibility of an airport was discussed, along with our plans for mixed development of the site; plans which we have now submitted.

"I have no doubt that if this party commissions a feasibility study on this site it will reach the same conclusion as all the previous reports, studies and market testing exercises – an airport is not a sustainable proposition."



North & West

Rollercoaster ride for Dreamland continues

Administrators called in to Margate's pleasure palace but it remains 'business as usual' despite latest financial setback

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

DREAMLAND's financial plight took another significant twist last weekend as the company which operated it slumped into administration.

It comes less than six months after Sands Heritage Ltd revealed debts of £2.9 million and was forced to strike a new deal with creditors.

Now it has waved the little white flag and called in administrators Duff & Phelps to take over its running.

But the good news for the much loved revived park, which is gearing up for what it hopes will be a profitable summer season, is that the administrators intend to not only keep Dreamland open for business, but also ensure it is in a fit state for a new operator to come in and take it over.

Ironically, the news came as the park welcomed in thousands of visitors for the late May bank holiday weekend.

Nearly 3,000 alone attended to

visit a special exhibition devoted to classic TV show *Only Fools and Horses* (see box).

In a statement issued by Duff & Phelps, managing directors Benjamin Wiles and Paul Williams, said: "Dreamland remains open and the park will continue to operate as normal whilst the joint administrators work alongside the existing management team to conduct an operational turnaround.

"The joint administrators will evaluate the prospects of the business before engaging with any parties interested in its acquisition, although registrations of interest are welcome."

Benjamin Wiles added: "Using our experience in the successful management and turnaround of Fantasy Island in Skegness, our aim is to bring to fruition the vision of the business and ensure its financial stability going forward.

"It is very much business as usual, and with a full programme of high profile events throughout the year, new rides and the opening of the Hall by The Sea in 2016, Dreamland is now in position to have an outstanding year."

Sands Heritage was hired by Thanet District Council to run the park in October 2014. At the time it was heralded as a safe pair of hands with its board comprising of "industry and financial professionals who can demonstrate sector specific success with visitor attractions such as ZSL London Zoo, Kidzania and the new London Paramount Entertainment resort being planned in Kent"

Nick Conington, its executive chairman, was already a major investor in Margate through the Sands Hotel.

He said: "This new phase for the pleasure park will enable it to thrive and continue to bring more and more visitors to Margate, the essential ingredient to further enable regeneration."

Rob Kenyon, Thanet District Council's director of community services, said: "We are pleased one of Thanet's major tourist attractions will be open for business as usual throughout the summer. We will work closely with the management and the joint administrators to secure a positive and sustainable future for Dreamland to grow in 2016 and beyond and one



that continues to entertain residents and visitors alike.

"The council remains committed to the development of the site and the benefits that it will offer the district."

Delays on getting rides online – most notably the Scenic Railway – proved a problem for its opening summer season, although the offering has

been greatly enhanced subsequently.

In December, Sands Heritage had to enter what is known as a company voluntary agreement which saw debts with creditors restructured to allow it to continue to try and trade its way out of trouble.

Dreamland is seen as one of the key drivers, alongside the Turner Contemporary, in reviving Margate.

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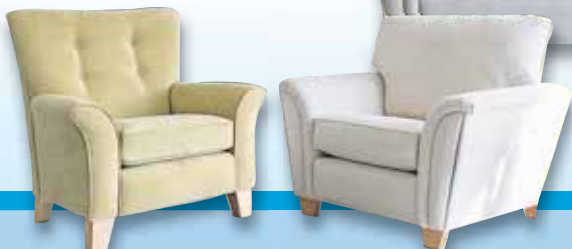
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THOUSANDS HEAD FOR LOVELY JUBBLY EXHIBITION

IT HAS been 13 years since Del, Rodney and the rest of the Trotter clan bid farewell to millions of fans, but it seems our affection for long-running comedy show *Only Fools and Horses* is still as strong as ever.

All week an exhibition has been running at the ballroom at Margate's Dreamland, showcasing an array of original props and costumes from the original hit BBC comedy.

Nearly 3,000 people attended the first three days alone - a figure swollen due to two stars - actors John Challis and Sue Holderness, better known as Boycie and Marlene appearing in person to meet fans and sign autographs.

Some fans queued for three hours to meet their heroes.

The show celebrated the famous episode *The Jolly Boys Outing* which was filmed in Margate in 1989 and was watched by more than 20 million viewers.

Speaking to KoS, Mr Challis said: "I think we were down here for about 10 days filming. It was one of those times when you were having a great time and getting paid. The feeling was like we were on holiday."

"I'm constantly amazed we're still doing Boycie. But I'm not surprised. The show was special because people really cared about it. People were attached to it because it was so personal - they say it helped them through difficult times but just making them smile."



People love it."

Added Sue Holderness: "I love being Marlene again. We were so blessed to be part of that fabulous show. I miss her terribly so it's great to be reunited with her."

"I don't mind at all that she's defined my career, because lots of people never have that. To spend your life making people laugh is a great treat."

"All the girls on set were very jealous of all the boys getting to go down to Margate and having such a great time by all accounts."

The event featured the likes of the famous Batman and Robin outfits, sets from the Trotters' flat in Peckham. It finishes on Sunday. Actor Patrick Murray, who played Mickey Pearce attended this Saturday to meet fans.

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INTRODUCTION

Will Spain be the first team to win three European Championship titles in a row? Will Germany be the invincible force again?

Will Belgium's young stars shine on the big stage?

Or will England give the travelling army something to cheer at last?

How much pressure is on France, who play host to 23 visiting teams?

In this special 16-page supplement, we take a look at all the teams and the star players. There's a stadium guide, the lowdown on each group as well as a fantastic wall chart to follow the progress of every team.

As the excitement builds with just days left until the big kick off, England may be quietly thinking they have an outside chance.

Pre-tournament preparations have gone well, with victories over Turkey, Australia and Portugal under their belts, and the Three Lions will surely be targeting the semi-finals at least, for the first time since football came home in 1996.

Under the stewardship of Roy Hodgson, who featured as a player for Tonbridge Angels, Gravesend & Northfleet, Maidstone United and Ashford Town, expectations appear to have been re-evaluated and there is a soothing calm about the England camp going into the tournament.

And the county links don't stop with the manager.

Match-winner against Portugal, and the man at the heart of the England defence, Chris Smalling, is very much made in Kent, having caught the eye at Maidstone's Gallagher Stadium before being snapped up by Fulham and, ultimately, Manchester United.

Meanwhile, Ryan Bertrand, who went to school in Medway and briefly featured for Gillingham's youth team as a teenager will be vying with Tottenham's Danny Rose for a spot at left-back when England run out against Russia in Marseille on Saturday.

Spain, Germany and hosts France will all fancy themselves to go all the way, but with Leicester City defying the odds to claim the Premier League title this year, there is no reason why England can't take inspiration from the Foxes' success and follow suit.

Either way, it's set to be a fantastic festival of football, and with Kent on Sunday's comprehensive guide to everything going on at the tournament, you can be sure that you'll never miss a thing.

THE TEAM

ARCHANT

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Hodgson: The England boss' roots are firmly in Kent having played for Tonbridge Angels, Gravesend & Northfleet, Maidstone United and Ashford Town, but can he guide England to silverware across the Channel?

32



Euro stars: We take a look at the biggest talents ready to strut their stuff on the international stage this summer.

34



England: It's half a century since the Three Lions last tasted international glory, but Roy Hodgson's exciting young team could spring a surprise this summer.

38

WALLCHART

MATCH SCHEDULE FRANCE JUNE 10-JULY 10 2016

THE FINAL

SEMI-FINALS

QUARTER-FINALS

LAST 16

GROUP A

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| FRANCE | ROMANIA |
| ALBANIA | SWITZERLAND |
| FRANCE | ALBANIA |
| ROMANIA | ALBANIA |
| SWITZERLAND | FRANCE |

GROUP B

| | |
|----------|----------|
| WALES | SLOVAKIA |
| ENGLAND | RUSSIA |
| RUSSIA | SLOVAKIA |
| ENGLAND | WALES |
| SLOVAKIA | ENGLAND |

GROUP C

| | |
|-----------|-----------|
| POLAND | N IRELAND |
| GERMANY | UKRAINE |
| UKRAINE | N IRELAND |
| GERMANY | POLAND |
| N IRELAND | GERMANY |
| UKRAINE | POLAND |

GROUP D

| | |
|---------|---------|
| IRELAND | SWEDEN |
| BELGIUM | ITALY |
| ITALY | SWEDEN |
| BELGIUM | IRELAND |
| IRELAND | BELGIUM |
| ITALY | SWEDEN |

GROUP E

| | |
|------------|------------|
| AUSTRIA | HUNGARY |
| PORTUGAL | KAZAKHSTAN |
| KAZAKHSTAN | PORTUGAL |
| AUSTRIA | HUNGARY |
| HUNGARY | PORTUGAL |
| PORTUGAL | AUSTRIA |

Wall chart: Never miss a game with our simple guide to who's playing where and when.

36



Wales: Fresh from winning the Champions League with Real Madrid, Gareth Bale will look to inspire Wales to success in France.

42

SHOW NO FEAR

Leicester's glory can be our inspiration, says England boss and former Kent star Hodgson

Hope rather than expectation is the overriding emotion as England look to make their mark at Euro 2016, yet Leicester's fairytale campaign offers tantalising proof of what can be achieved when a group of talented players buy into a philosophy.

Roy Hodgson has gone about replacing much of the old guard with a fresh, young core, while simultaneously securing impressive results and England's passage to Euro 2016 with the only 100 per cent record in qualification.

For Hodgson, who plied his trade as a player for the likes of Kent non-league sides Ashford, Tonbridge, Maidstone and Gravesend, he knows his team need to win the mental game. "I don't want the players to be fearful. I don't want the players to be weighed down by expectations or thoughts of what might happen if they don't succeed," the England manager said.



"We've seen this year the example with Leicester City; weeks and weeks turning into months and months of how long can this last? Is it all going to crack up?"

"Can you really make the Champions League? Can you finish above this team or that team? Can you win the league?"

"Each time what they've done is work hard, try hard and tried to make certain going into each game they're capable of winning it."

"That's all we can do as well. It's happened in the past. Nobody expected Denmark to win it in '92; nobody expected Greece to win in 2004; no one expected Leicester to win the league."

Out of the 24 teams heading to France, bookmakers make England fourth favourites for the crown – little surprise given they beat hosts France in November and second favourites Germany two months ago.

Questions still linger over defensive strength, captain Wayne Rooney's role and the impact of inexperience, but there is at least some hope after the disastrous 2014 World Cup.

The number of years since England have won a major football tournament.

VITAL STATISTIC
50



■ Skipper Wayne Rooney's place in the starting XI is the topic of red-hot debate thanks to the flying form of fellow hitmen Harry Kane and Jamie Vardy.
Pictures: PA

Whether they have enough to end 50 years of hurt remains to be seen.

France will this summer play host to 24 nations and 51 matches between June 10 and the winner lifting the trophy to a background of ticker tape and fireworks at the Stade de France on July 10.

Among the other teams are Wales, the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland ensuring ample local interest.

It will be the biggest European Championship of all-time, with more teams and more matches than ever as a large chunk of UEFA's membership make

the most of the bloated format.

Whether the unnecessarily expanded competition takes the edge off the finals remains to be seen, but it certainly added extra excitement to qualification.

World Cup semi-finalists Holland failed to make the finals as smaller nations proved more competitive than ever, with Iceland, Albania and Slovakia reaching the finals for the first time.

Despite England's inability to win anything since 1966, they are still seen as one of the big-hitters of the European game.

The Premier League form of Harry

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Kane and Jamie Vardy has raised hopes that the Three Lions will possess enough attacking quality to make up for their side's supposed defensive deficiencies at the tournament.

If England boss Hodgson bows to public pressure and pairs Kane and Vardy together, skipper Rooney's position could be under threat.

But Terry Venables, who memorably guided England to the semi-finals at Euro 96, has a simple solution – pick all three.

"You can play Kane, Vardy and Rooney," said Venables.

"It reminds me of the clamour for me not to pick Alan Shearer ahead of Euro 96. I always knew I was going to pick Alan, even if I kept him sweating a bit in the build-up.

"But it would have been madness to have left him out – just like it would be with Rooney.

"Kane plays at a strong canter, Vardy is flat out, and you've got Rooney who is crafty. Rooney has learnt to do the Teddy Sheringham thing and ask defenders questions.

"That interchange of positions has got to be delivered in football at this level now."

Venables says Hodgson has a squad capable of challenging in France and has no doubt what would be classed as a successful tournament.

"I think the squad is fantastic, look how many players at that level you've got," he added.

"We're packed with goals with Vardy and Kane – those boys are just amazing – and then there's Marcus Rashford.

"Roy's got the cards. There's no doubt we've seen the players playing at a very high level in the Premier League and now



■ England's players have been in jovial mood before the serious business gets under way in France on June 11. The Three Lions' first game will be against Russia before they lock horns with Wales (June 16) and Slovenia (June 20).

FACTFILE
England's disastrous and embarrassing 2014 World Cup group-stage exit – where they failed to win a game in Brazil – meant they were forced to go home having fallen at the opening hurdle for the first time since 1958.



And, although stressing that he wishes to be regarded as a striker, Rooney says he can adapt to fill the needs of the team.

"As a player you are always adapting," he told Sky Sports News.

"You adapt to your team-mates and different coaches you work under. It depends what the coaches want from you. Throughout my career I've adapted to different situations and different teams I've played in, and I have no problem doing it.

"In tournament football you need players who can play in different positions. I've always felt like I can play in different positions. Obviously I want to play as a striker but I've always believed I am capable of playing in different positions.

"I think you saw in the 2006 World Cup with Owen Hargreaves, he was probably England's best player, purely for the fact he could play in different positions."

After crashing out of the 2014 World Cup in the group stages, England are expected to produce a much better result in France.

Although he would not be drawn on how far he believes he can lead England, Rooney says the squad is strong enough to beat anyone.

"I don't know," he said when asked about tournament expectations.

"I feel we have got a very good squad and it is probably the first time I feel that the squad is capable, in any given game, of matching any team there is.

"It is obviously about having the consistency to do that throughout the tournament so you never know. "

internationals. These boys know what they are doing and they are loving it.

"What would be success? To win it. And they can win it."

Even if Rooney doesn't start from the off against Russia on June 11 in England's opening game, his experience will be key.

At 30, the former Everton talent has carried the country's weight of expectancy on his broad shoulders for many a tournament.

Some, like Euro 2004, saw him become a national hero while others appearances are perhaps best forgotten.

What can't be disputed though is that an older and wiser Rooney will be someone for major tournament rookies like Kane, Vardy, Eric Dier and Dele Alli to turn to as they try to make an impact similar to the one that their captain made

12 years ago – before his sublime showing was cut short by a broken metatarsal.

Rooney is happy to help out in whatever way he can but insists he can adapt to a new role in an England side he feels can "match any team there is" at the France showcase.

Despite breaking Sir Bobby Charlton's long-standing goalscoring record for England, Rooney – now with 51 goals from his 109 caps – has been forced to play in a deeper role for his club of late with the out-going Louis van Gaal at Old Trafford preferring to utilise the explosive talents of Rashford.

That may well be where he is favoured by many to play for England over the summer, giving licence to Kane and Vardy – who notched 49 top-flight goals between them last season – to start in attack.



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Zlatan IBRAHIMOVIC

Age: 34

Country: Sweden (112 caps)

Club: Paris St Germain

Position: Striker

Considered as one of the world's best frontmen - with an ego to match - 'Ibra' brings a sprinkling of magic to any match that he takes part in. Has announced he will be leaving PSG this summer and will be desperate to shine while he remains in the shop window. A sublime showing in the Euros could fashion another move to a giant club so the hitman will need no added incentives. Can frustrate but has an aura about him that eases that annoyance, helped by the fact he is a fan of producing the spectacular.

Kevin

DE BRUYNE

Age: 24

Country: Belgium (38 caps)

Club: Manchester City

Position: Midfielder

Another member of Belgium's golden generation that promises so much. De Bruyne was always tipped for the top when he broke through at Genk. The excitement at home, and abroad, rose when he joined Chelsea in 2012 but strangely he never really made an impact under Jose Mourinho. With a point to prove, the classy midfielder rebuilt his career in Germany with first Werder Bremen, on loan, and then Wolfsburg. Manchester City had seen enough in August 2015 and brought De Bruyne back to England where he has been a massive hit. City's title hopes faded when he was sidelined with an injury.



Toni KROOS

Age: 26

Country: Germany (64 caps)

Club: Real Madrid

Position: Midfielder

Has emerged as a transfer target for incoming Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola and it's easy to see why. Kroos oozes class and is more than mobile enough to deal with the breakneck pace of the English game. Can dictate the pace of play and is instrumental in how Madrid play - which is why they won't be keen to sell him.

EUROS

Players expected to shine



Gianluigi BUFFON

Age: 38

Country: Italy (156 caps)

Club: Juventus

Position: Goalkeeper

Millions of eyebrows were raised when the Italian legend's name was not on Chelsea-bound Italy boss Antonio Conte's pre-Euro 2016 training squad list. But they quickly dropped when no other cup finalist had made the initial squad due to their club commitments. Buffon may be 38 but he is still a mainstay for Juventus and the Azzurri. Italy conceded just seven goals in their qualifiers and their number one's experience at the back makes Conte's side a tough to break down. This will be Buffon's last European Championships with post-World Cup 2018 retirement on the cards.

Mesut OZIL

Age: 27

Country: Germany (72 caps)

Club: Arsenal

Position: Midfielder

Ozil is his club and country's creator-in-chief. The midfielder's growing influence at Arsenal reached such absurd levels last campaign he became the Premier League's playmaking king. He created 146 chances, a league record, and fell just one short of another top honour - the most number of assists (20) in a season.





Cristiano RONALDO

Age: 31
Country: Portugal (125 caps)
Club: Real Madrid
Position: Forward

Will go down in history as one of the game's all-time greats. Took a while to settle at Manchester United, after a move from Sporting Lisbon, but Ronaldo went on to justify the decision to hand him the famous number seven shirt at Old Trafford. Real Madrid came calling in 2009 to the tune of £80million, a fee which United found too good to turn down. How they could have done with him since though with Ronaldo ripping up the goalscoring record books in La Liga and at the Bernabeu. Burst onto the scene as a winger but now seen more as a forward, the only thing missing off Portugal's all-time record goalscorer's CV is guiding his country to international glory.

Luka MODRIC

Age: 30
Country: Croatia (89 caps)

Club: Real Madrid
Position: Midfielder

There was a time when it was suggested Modric's slight frame would stop him from fulfilling his potential. But those days have long gone. Like a boxer who opponents cannot lay a glove on, Modric does not allow markers to get close to him. Got a great eye for a pass and is a joy to watch.



STARS

the brightest this summer

Andres INIESTA

Age: 32
Country: Spain (107 caps)
Club: Barcelona

Position: Midfielder

Little schemer has helped Barcelona and Spain enjoy a golden decade. What Iniesta lacks in size he makes up for in genius. Pops passes around the pitch and picks up almost invisible pockets of space. Crowning moment was netting 2010 World Cup winning goal.



Robert LEWANDOWSKI

Age: 27
Country: Poland (75 caps)
Club: Bayern Munich
Position: Striker

Seen as something of a late developer, Lewandowski has emerged as one of the most feared strikers on the planet, let alone Europe. Netting five times in nine remarkable minutes for Bayern Munich in November 2015 against Wolfsburg did his reputation no harm at all. Got five chances that night but usually only needs one.



Yevhen KONOPLYANKA

Age: 26
Country: Ukraine (51 caps)
Club: Sevilla

Position: Midfielder

Can the winger be given any bigger billing than the fact he is nicknamed the Ukrainian Messi? Probably not. His dribbling skills saw him catch the attention for Dnipro. But a 2015 move to Sevilla has left him warming the bench, like he did in the Europa League final.



GROUP A



| | | | |
|-------------|-----|-------------|---|
| FRANCE | ■ ■ | ROMANIA | Fri June 10 8pm (ITV) Stade de France, Paris |
| ALBANIA | ■ ■ | SWITZERLAND | Sat June 11 2pm (BBC) Stade Félix Bollaert-Delelis, Lens |
| ROMANIA | ■ ■ | SWITZERLAND | Wed June 15 5pm (ITV) Parc des Princes, Paris |
| FRANCE | ■ ■ | ALBANIA | Wed June 15 8pm (ITV) Stade Vélodrome, Marseille |
| ROMANIA | ■ ■ | ALBANIA | Sunday June 19 8pm (BBC) Parc OL, Lyon |
| SWITZERLAND | ■ ■ | FRANCE | Sunday June 19 8pm (BBC) Stade Pierre-Mauroy, Lille |

GROUP B



| | | | |
|----------|-----|----------|--|
| WALES | ■ ■ | SLOVAKIA | Sat June 11 5pm (BBC) Matmut Atlantique, Bordeaux |
| ENGLAND | ■ ■ | RUSSIA | Sat June 11 8pm (ITV) Stade Vélodrome, Marseille |
| RUSSIA | ■ ■ | SLOVAKIA | Wed June 15 2pm (BBC) Stade Pierre-Mauroy, Lille |
| ENGLAND | ■ ■ | WALES | Thur June 16 2pm (BBC) Stade Félix Bollaert-Delelis, Lens |
| RUSSIA | ■ ■ | WALES | Mon June 20 8pm (ITV) Stadium Municipal, Toulouse |
| SLOVAKIA | ■ ■ | ENGLAND | Mon June 20 8pm (ITV) Stade Geoffroy-Guichard, St-Étienne |

GROUP C



| | | | |
|-----------|-----|-----------|---|
| POLAND | ■ ■ | N IRELAND | Sun June 12 5pm (BBC) Allianz Riviera, Nice |
| GERMANY | ■ ■ | UKRAINE | Sun June 12 8pm (BBC) Stade Pierre-Mauroy, Lille |
| UKRAINE | ■ ■ | N IRELAND | Thur June 16 5pm (ITV) Parc OL, Lyon |
| GERMANY | ■ ■ | POLAND | Thur June 16 8pm (ITV) Stade de France, Paris |
| N IRELAND | ■ ■ | GERMANY | Tue June 21 5pm (BBC) Parc des Princes, Paris |
| UKRAINE | ■ ■ | POLAND | Tue June 21 5pm (BBC) Stade Vélodrome, Marseille |

MATCH S

FRANCE JUNE 1



THE

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v Semi-final 2**

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Parc OL, Lyon

QUARTER



**QF 1
v QF 3**

June 30, 8pm,
Stade Vélodrome, Marseille



**QF 3
v QF 4**

July 1, 8pm, Stade Pierre-
Mauroy, Lille

LAS

QF1



**Runner-up A
v Runner-up C**

June 25, 2pm, Stade Geoffroy-
Guichard, St Étienne

QF3



**Winner B
v 3rd AC**

June 25, 5pm, Parc des
Princes, Paris

QF2



**Winner D
v 3rd BE**

June 25, 8pm, Stade Félix
Bollaert-Delelis, Lens

QF4



**Winner F
v Runner-up E**

June 26, 8pm, Stadium
Municipal, Toulouse

SCHEDULE

10-JULY 10 2016

FINAL

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
| | |

10, 8pm
France, Paris

FINALS

**Semi-final 3
v Semi-final 4**

July 7, 8pm, Stade
Vélodrome, Marseille

R-FINALS



**QF5
v QF 6**

July 2, 8pm, Matmut
Atlantique, Bordeaux



**QF 7
v QF 8**

July 3, 8pm,
Stade de France, Paris

T 16

QF5



**Winner C
v 3rd ABF**

June 26, 5pm, Stade
Pierre-Mauroy, Lille

QF7



**Winner A
v 3rd CDE**

June 26, 2pm, Parc OL,
Lyon

QF6



**Winner E
v Runner-up D**

June 27, 5pm, Stade de
France, Paris

QF8



**Runner-up B
v Runner-up F**

June 27, 8pm,
Allianz Riviera, Nice

GROUP D



| | | | |
|------------------|--|------------------|--|
| TURKEY | | CROATIA | Sun June 12 2pm (ITV) Parc des Princes, Paris |
| SPAIN | | CZECH REP | Mon June 13 2pm (ITV) Stadium Municipal, Toulouse |
| CZECH REP | | CROATIA | Fri June 17 5pm (BBC) Stade Geoffroy-Guichard, Saint-Étienne |
| SPAIN | | TURKEY | Fri June 17 8pm (ITV) Allianz Riviera, Nice |
| CROATIA | | SPAIN | Tue June 21 8pm (ITV) Matmut Atlantique, Bordeaux |
| CZECH REP | | TURKEY | Tue June 21 8pm (ITV) Std Felix Bollaert-Delelis, Lens |

GROUP E



| | | | |
|----------------|--|----------------|--|
| IRELAND | | SWEDEN | Mon June 13 5pm (BBC) Stade de France, Paris |
| BELGIUM | | ITALY | Mon June 13 8pm (BBC) Parc OL, Lyon |
| ITALY | | SWEDEN | Fri June 17 2pm (ITV) Stadium Municipal, Toulouse |
| BELGIUM | | IRELAND | Sat June 18 2pm (ITV) Matmut Atlantique, Bordeaux |
| ITALY | | IRELAND | Wed June 22 8pm (ITV) Stade Pierre-Mauroy, Lille |
| SWEDEN | | BELGIUM | Wed June 22 8pm (ITV) Allianz Riviera, Nice |

GROUP F



| | | | |
|-----------------|--|-----------------|--|
| AUSTRIA | | HUNGARY | Tue June 14 5pm (ITV) Matmut Atlantique, Bordeaux |
| PORTUGAL | | ICELAND | Tue June 14 8pm (BBC) Stade Geoffroy-Guichard, Saint-Étienne |
| ICELAND | | HUNGARY | Sat June 18 5pm (BBC) Stade Vélodrome, Marseille |
| PORTUGAL | | AUSTRIA | Sat June 18 8pm (BBC) Parc des Princes, Paris |
| HUNGARY | | PORTUGAL | Wed June 22 5pm (BBC) Parc OL, Lyon |
| ICELAND | | AUSTRIA | Wed June 22 5pm (BBC) Stade de France, Paris |



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KOS 2/16



GROUP B



ENGLAND



FACTFILE

Best result: semi-finals
1968, 1996

Coach: Roy Hodgson

Leading scorers: all-time
- Wayne Rooney (51);

current - Wayne Rooney (51)

Most appearances: all-time - Peter Shilton
(125); current - Wayne Rooney (109)

Association formed: 1863

Nickname: Three Lions

Recent failures may have curbed expectation, yet Roy Hodgson's team blitzed through qualification without dropping a point.

As well as defensive concerns, there are selection dilemmas, including whether all-time leading scorer Wayne Rooney should be accommodated. However, the exciting attacking options at Hodgson's disposal at least give England dark-horse status.

Growing concerns about a shaky back four are likely to remain – especially with many sceptics believing England's prowess in forward areas is only papering over the cracks.

Yet they've already proved against Germany in a recent friendly that while they may concede two, they're good enough to score three.

Spurs hitman Harry Kane appears to be first choice while it is not yet known if his pacy compatriot Jamie Vardy, pictured, will be used. If deployed from the bench, Hodgson's side may have a lethal weapon as opponents begin to tire.

Dele Alli is good enough to take the tournament by storm.

However, concerns over the fitness of fellow midfielder Jack Wilshere, a favourite of Hodgson's – and where to play Rooney are likely to



**STAR
MAN**

**JAMIE
VARDY**

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dominate the pre-tournament build-up.

Rooney may play as part of a front three or he could – as he did so superbly in Manchester United's 2-1 after extra-time FA Cup victory over Crystal Palace – be deployed in a deep-lying midfield role.



■ Raheem Sterling's poor display in the recent friendly against Turkey could end his hopes of making the XI.

FORMATION: 4-3-3



POSSIBLE XI

GK Hart **CM** Wilshere
RB Walker **CM** Dier
CB Cahill **RF** Lallana
CB Smalling **CF** Kane
LB Rose **LF** Rooney
CM Alli

RUSSIA

FACTFILE

Best result: winners 1960 (as Soviet Union)

Coach: Leonid Slutski

Leading scorers: all-time - Oleh Blokhin (42)

for Soviet Union); current - Aleksandr Kerzhakov (30)

Most appearances: all-time - Sergei Ignashevich (114); current - Sergei Ignashevich (114)

Association formed: 1912

Nickname: None

It looked unlikely that Russia would even be in France after they took just eight points from their opening six games during the qualifiers.

Leonid Slutski quickly replaced Fabio Capello (remember him?) and guided the side to four straight victories which turned their fortunes around.

They will want to impress ahead of hosting the 2018 World Cup and will have a place in the knockout stages on their agenda having being transformed under Slutski.

Capello, a high earner, was never popular and the gloom that surrounded the national side has lifted following his departure. While that has raised expectations, it's easy to see why, given the upturn in form.

A heartbreaking injury to chief play-

FORMATION: 4-2-3-1



POSSIBLE XI

GK Akinfeev
RB Smolnikov
CB Ignashevich
CB V Berezutski
LB Kombarov
CM Denisov

CM Glushakov
RW Kokorin
AM Shirokov
LW Shatov
CF Dzyuba

maker Alan Dzagoev has checked that optimism.

In a squad of players who largely play their football in Russia, it was Dzagoev who provided a sprinkle of stardust to his team's efforts.

As pivotal for his club, CSKA Moscow, as he is for his country, it's unsure who will step up to the plate in his absence.

Much of that responsibility will fall

STAR MAN

ARTYOM DZYUBA

Hadn't netted for Russia until September 2014, but top-scored with eight goals during the qualifiers.

FIXTURES

Saturday June 11

Wales v Slovakia
5pm (BBC)

England v Russia
8pm (ITV)

Wednesday June 15

Russia v Slovakia
2pm (BBC)

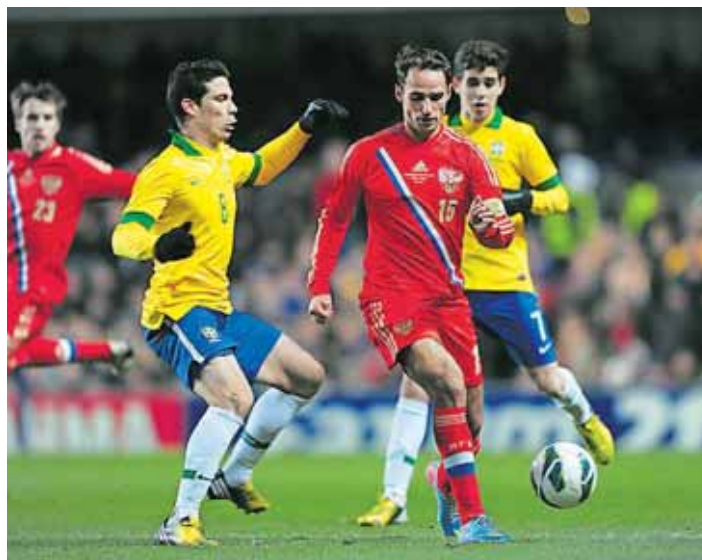
Thursday June 16

England v Wales
2pm (BBC)

Monday June 20

Russia v Wales
8pm (ITV)

Slovakia v England
8pm (ITV)



■ Romon Shirokov, right, shows off his skills during Russia's international friendly with Brazil at Chelsea's Stamford Bridge ground back in 2013. Picture: PA

on widemen Aleksandr Kokorin and Oleg Shatov. Yet it's in central areas that Russia will be hurt most by their star player's absence.

A solid core to the team, with plenty of pace and energy out wide, could cause a few problems. And there's plenty of experience too with the ageing squad likely to contain, if

selected, two centre-backs with a combined age of 69 in the starting XI – if selected.

The duo's lack of pace is a serious problem so the screening capabilities of holding midfielder Igor Denisov – who captained the team under Capello – will once again be needed if Russia are to taste any type of success.

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SLOVAKIA



FACTFILE

Best result: never previously qualified

Coach: Ján Kozák

Leading scorer: all-time - Róbert Vittek (23); current - Róbert Vittek (23)

Most appearances: all-time - Miroslav Karhan (107); current - Marek Hamsík (83)

Association formed: 1938

Nickname: None

Won their opening six games in qualification and beat reigning champions Spain at home back in October 2014, before stumbling over the line with a first European Championship finals place in sight.

They have match-winners in their midfield in Napoli's Marek Hamsík and former Manchester City man Vladimir Weiss. England should be wary as they eliminated defending champions Italy at the 2010 World Cup.

A three-game winless run during qualifying tempered some of the growing expectations and a surprising home defeat to Belarus burst plenty of optimism. But Jan Kozak's team still did enough to finish three points clear of the Ukrainians to secure a richly-deserved runners-up berth.

Hamsík scored five of their seven goals, jointly topping the group's scoring

FORMATION: 4-2-3-1



POSSIBLE XI

GK Kozacik
RB Pekarik
CB Skrtel
CB Durica
LB Hubocan
CM Kucka

CM Pecovsky
RW Weiss
AM Hamsik
LW Mak
CF Duris

charts with Spain striker Paco Alcacer. And it is the Napoli man who is their only genuine world-class talent.

He captains the Serie A club and is Slovakia's heartbeat. In a counter-attacking system he is the man who gets the ball out wide as quickly as possible and can dictate his side's tempo when they need to slow the game down.

STAR MAN

MAREK HAMSÍK

Outstanding Napoli talent is simply the greatest player of his country's generation.

FIXTURES

Saturday June 11

Wales v Slovakia
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8pm (ITV)

Wednesday June 15

Russia v Slovakia
2pm (BBC)

Thursday June 16

England v Wales
2pm (BBC)

Monday June 20

Russia v Wales
8pm (ITV)

Slovakia v England
8pm (ITV)



■ Ondrej Duda, pictured in action against the Republic of Ireland, is hoping to be in his manager's starting XI when they take to the pitch against Wales on June 11.

Picture: PA

It would be unwise for England and Wales to take the Slovaks lightly. They are seen as one of the more intriguing long shots for a great run at the competition.

This is their first Euros, but a run to the last 16 at the 2010 World Cup shows the boys in blue are no mugs. Kozak's team now look even better on paper than they did back then.

They have lost just twice in 17 games – a stat which shows they're hard to beat.

And when you consider they pack a genuine punch on the counter there's no reason to suggest they can't get out of the group.

The loss of leading scorer Robert Vittek has been a dagger blow to the heart of their chance. But Slovakia's biggest problem remains that if they secure progression by finishing second – a distinct possibility – it would probably set up a tie in the first knockout stage with France.



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WALES



FACTFILE

Best result: never previously qualified

Coach: Chris Coleman

Leading scorers: all-time

- Ian Rush (28); current - Gareth Bale (19)

Most appearances: all-time - Neville Southall (92); current - Chris Gunter (64)

Association formed: 1876

Nickname: Dreigiau (Dragons)

Robbie Savage has compared Wales to Leicester as Chris Coleman's side prepare for the European Championships as one of the tournament's underdogs.

Coleman, *inset*, - who has recently agreed a two-year contract extension until 2018 - did not include star man Gareth Bale in his initial squad as he continues to recover from a knee strain. But his country's major star is expected to be fit in time for the Euros.

Wales have been drawn against England, Slovakia and Russia in Group B as they prepare for their first major finals since 1958. And former Leicester favourite Savage, who collected 39 Wales caps during his career, has said the current crop can look at the Foxes' remarkable Premier League title success for inspiration in France.

"I think Wales are like Leicester," he said.

"In terms of the team spirit and the way Wales celebrate after every game, they have the same togetherness.

"There is no superstar other than Bale, and if you look at Riyad Mahrez they are very similar. Bale is better than Mahrez but he has had an unbelievable season.

"If half of those Wales players walked down the street you wouldn't recognise them and I think Leicester are the same.

"If Danny Drinkwater or Christian Fuchs walked down the street in London or



FORMATION: 3-5-2



POSSIBLE XI

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| GK Hennessey | CM Ramsey |
| RB Gunter | CM Allen |
| CB Chester | CM King |
| CB Williams | CF Robson-Kanu |
| CB Taylor | CF Bale |
| LW Davies | |

Manchester no one would recognise them.

"They go under the radar, but they get on with their job and if you add to that Bale or (Aaron) Ramsey - or Jamie Vardy and Mahrez - they are so similar and they will look at Leicester and think of it as an opportunity."

Savage also labelled Bale as the best player in Group B and believes he is backed up by a strong midfield.

"He is the outstanding player in the group, no question," the BBC pundit added.

"Harry Kane has done great, some of the England players have done great but on his day Bale is the best player in the group - with him Wales can get out of the group, without him it will be tough.

"Undoubtedly he'd walk into the England side and be the best player in that team, too.

"I think the midfield, Andy King now a Premier League winner, Liverpool's Joe Allen and Aaron Ramsey, that

■ Aaron Ramsey, right, and his Wales team-mates have plenty to celebrate of late having ended their country's lengthy wait to reach a major football tournament.

Picture: PA



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STAR MAN

AARON RAMSEY

Arsenal's 'new' number eight may get less headlines than Gareth Bale but he's almost as important.



■ Skipper Ashley Williams, right, will be hoping to remain the rock that Wales' success is built around as they prepare to upset the odds in France this summer.

Picture: PA

FIXTURES

Saturday June 11

Wales v Slovakia
5pm (BBC)

England v Russia
8pm (ITV)

Wednesday June 15

Russia v Slovakia
2pm (BBC)

Thursday June 16

England v Wales
2pm (BBC)

Monday June 20

Russia v Wales
8pm (ITV)

Slovakia v England
8pm (ITV)

midfield three is crucial. Add them to Gareth Bale and on their day they have an opportunity."

Meanwhile, John Hartson, another former Wales international, was praising the defensive work of Coleman's men after they conceded just four goals during their successful qualifying campaign.

"We defended well during the qualifiers. We kept six clean sheets in 10 games so we are more than a one-man team, but Gareth is pivotal for us of course," he said.

"Wales play three at the back, with three quality centre-halves. We have Ben Davies on the left-hand side, then there is Ashley Williams who is a rock for Swansea and revels in the role of Wales captain. You have James Chester

or James Collins at West Ham – another strong, reliable defender and Chris Gunter, who has over 50 caps, will get up and down the right.

"They defend strongly. Bale takes a lot of the credit but they kept clean sheets and finished second in the group.

"I was Chris Coleman's assistant for the first 14 months of this campaign and they work a lot with this defensive unit. They have changed to three at the back and they have that adaptability because defensively they are strong.

"You talk about Bale, Ramsey, Allen, Sam Vokes and Hal Robson-Kanu, but defending is one of Wales' strengths; six clean sheets in 10 games is some going."

Joe Ledley remains a major fitness concern ahead of the tournament.

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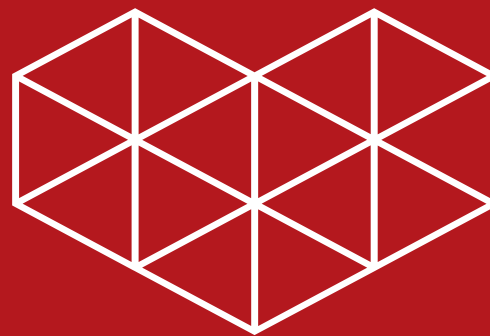
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Pubs raise a glass to England's success to keep cash coming in

By Chris Murphy

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

PUB landlords across the county are praying England dazzle in France as next weekend sees Euro 2016 kick-off and crowds flock to watch the games in a big match atmosphere.

A survey by pub trade bible The Pubcan nationwide said like-for-like sales were expected to soar by more than 10 per cent for two-thirds of licensees with one in five expecting a rise of more than 20 per cent.

If their hopes are realised, it would mean an average hike of 14 per cent - eclipsing the six per cent rise seen during the Rugby World Cup last year.

And with the miserable weather so far this year keeping crowds low, it is hoped the tournament will pack them in.

England's games are, as ever, likely to be the main attraction and the opening matches should give pubs the best chance to cash in.

The opening game for Roy Hodgson's team is next Saturday night with a potentially tough opener against Russia.

But the big one will be the following Thursday's clash with Wales. With a 2pm kick-off, thousands are expected to take late lunches from work and head to a pub to watch the action.

The landlord of the popular Huntsman Public House in Patterns Lane, Rochester is Peter Dockerill.

He said: "I know we will be packing them in during the matches. If England score they get a free drink and there is free food during half time."

"That's why I know this place will be heaving during the games, especially the England games."

"On these match nights, we get around 150 people coming in all cheering on England and willing them on."

The final group stage game for England is an 8pm kick-off on Monday, June 20 against Slovakia.

Adds Mr Dockerill: "We are in a good group, so I reckon we should make it through to the semis, which will be great for us. We work hard making these nights entertaining and that's what it's all about."

"I don't know how much more we



READY: England, pictured right during final pre-tournament friendly this week against Portugal, are first in action next Saturday evening.

will make on each night, because that can vary, but we are going to do alright, no worries about that. We love our football around here."

Wes Cattermole works at The Archer Pub, in Sandwich Road, Dover. He told us: "Lots of people are confident England can make it out of the group stages, and the further we get, the better pubs do."

"Our crowds can go up anything from a few dozen to over 70, which is great for a small pub like this."

"We show the games and the fans come - they are dedicated and enjoy

watching all the action in the atmosphere of a local."

"The weather hasn't been all that recently, and this tournament should help make up some income we missed out on."

A spokesman at The Railway Tavern in Wrotham Road, Gravesend, said: "We can't wait to get going here. Big competitions help bring in more people and we are completely geared up ready to go."

Nationwide, it is thought the tournament will pump in an extra £60 million in revenue in pub sales.



EARLY EXITS WON'T INFLUENCE EXIT CAMPAIGN, SAYS BORIS

DEFEAT for UK nations at Euro 2016 will not have any impact on the morale of the Brexit campaign ahead of the EU referendum, former London mayor Boris Johnson has suggested.

The football tournament is set to kick off on June 10 and will finish a month later with England and Wales due to face each other as well as Russia and Slovakia in the group stage.

Meanwhile, Northern Ireland will play Germany, Poland and Ukraine.

All group games will have been contested by the time the UK goes to the polls on June 23.

And the former mayor of London does not believe that defeats for the UK's football teams would impact on campaign morale.

He said: "I've never known a

campaign that's really fascinating so many people in so many different ways."

"I think people are tuning into this."

"I don't believe that there's any real threat."

"I think the British people have a robustness of spirit to be indifferent to any result, I am sure they will want to vote for freedom, democracy and taxpayer value."

David Scott, director of brands and insight at Carlsberg UK, told The Drinks Business magazine: "Euro 2016 is a huge opportunity for pubs."

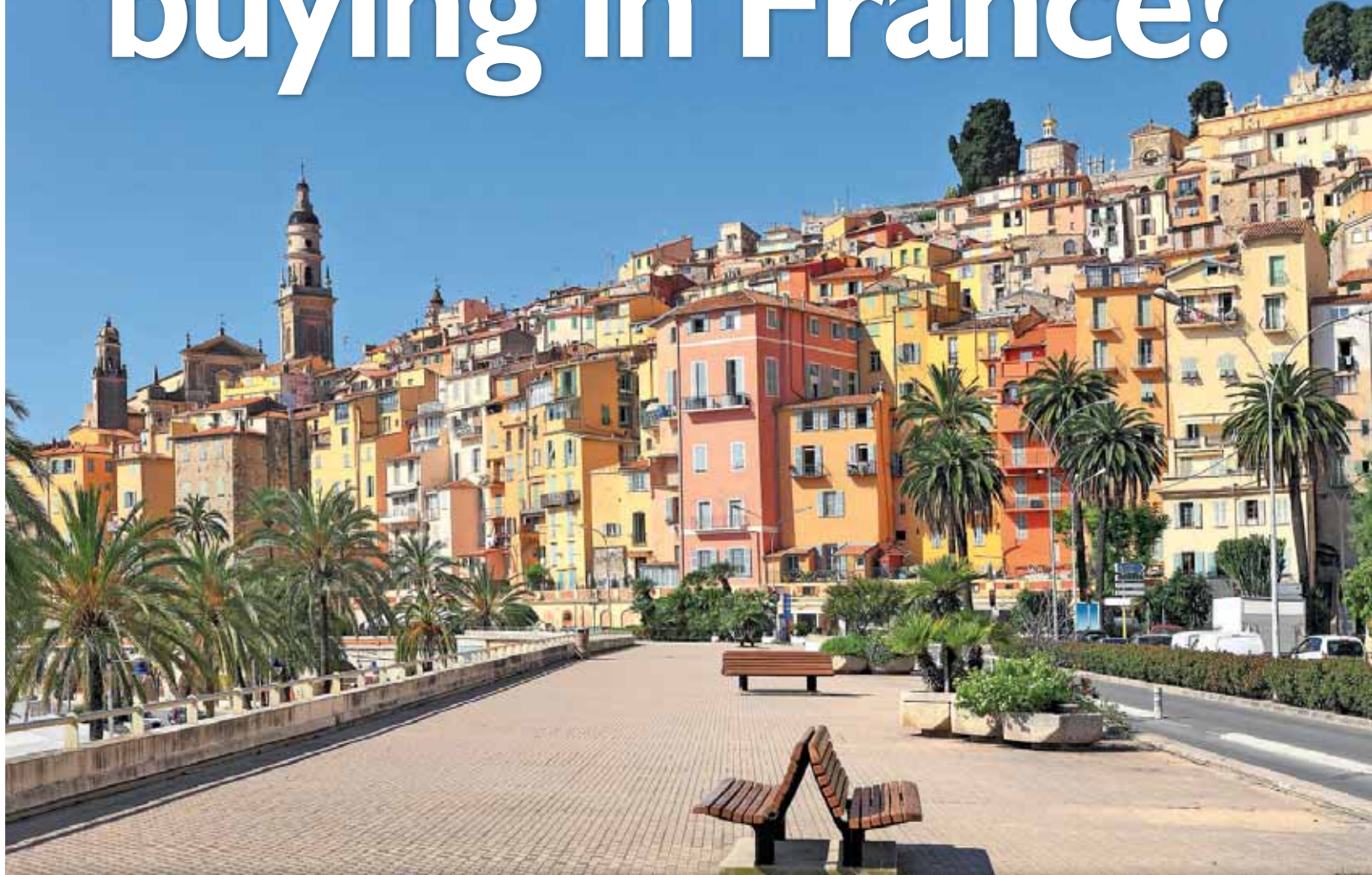
"Football tournaments are worth more than £60m to the on-trade and live football can add an uplift of 60 per cent to an outlet's rate of sale."

"We recognise the importance of this opportunity and we're investing heavily to help our customers encourage football fans off their sofas and into the pub."

"We know that 75 per cent of pub-goers watch football, presenting publicans with the perfect opportunity to engage existing customers and draw new ones in."

"This year is particularly important for the home nations with England, Wales and Northern Ireland all having qualified, meaning there are more matches and more opportunities for pubs. Licensees must capitalise on this as an opportunity not to be missed."

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Amid fears of a wave of migrant boats, just how safe is our coast?

Last weekend's arrival of a dinghy of migrants at Dymchurch has sparked a major debate over the county's security

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

DEAD bodies washing up on our shores is inevitable if patrols of the Kent coast aren't stepped up, a council chief has warned.

The rescue of 18 Albanian migrants - including two children - found in a dinghy off the coast of Dymchurch last weekend has again ignited a debate as to whether our borders are secure enough.

Of those that were rescued, five have been granted asylum, while the remaining 13 are set to be deported.

Robert Stilwell, 33, from Dartford, and Mark Stribling, 35, from Farningham, have been charged with people smuggling and will appear before crown court later this month.

Earlier this week, CCTV footage emerged of rubber inflatable boats being towed through Dymchurch in the dead of night, sparking further fears that the quiet Kent town is being used as a gateway for such activities.

Roger Wilkins, Shepway councillor and chair of Dymchurch Parish Council, said he hoped to hold a meeting with officials in the coming weeks to thrash out plans to combat the threat.

He told KoS: "It's very worrying for me that a seemingly increasing number of people are trying to enter Britain via Dymchurch.

"You can run up vehicles on the beach and then they're gone as quickly as that.

"But bringing young children all that way in a boat like that is extremely dangerous and it's fortunate that nobody was killed.

"We have all got to be extra vigilant in case it happens again, and start

looking at other ways to try and catch them.

"I'd like to see more regular patrols and we've got the search and rescue helicopter based at Lydd - they could be involved too.

"But it's difficult because you can thoroughly patrol one area and they might then nip in somewhere else.

"Something has got to be done because sooner or later we'll get bodies washing up on our shores and nobody wants that."

Border Force, which is part of the Home Office and is responsible for immigration and customs controls for people and goods entering the UK, patrols the UK's 7,000 miles of coastal borders with a fleet of five cutter vessels.

Three of these are in operation in UK waters at any one time, while one, HMC Protector, is currently deployed in the Aegean Sea between Greece and Turkey along with two other private vessels chartered by the Border Force to help deal with the European migrant situation.

A fifth is tied up in dock and manned by a skeleton staff, ready to substitute any of the operational vessels should the need arise.

A review of our maritime capability by the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), cited in a January report by the chief inspector of borders and immigration, said France had 20 times the resources per kilometre of coast.

However, stronger new maritime powers came into force this week, and are intended to crack down on illegal immigration and those trying to sneak in asylum seekers or those in breach of a deportation order into the country.

Border Force officers will be able to stop, board, divert and detain vessels, and arrest anyone they suspect has



ALERT: While security has increased at the likes of Dover, our coastline is just long it make full coverage difficult

broken immigration laws in the UK's territorial waters.

There will also be around half a dozen new patrol vessels deployed to help intercept attempts to smuggle dangerous weapons, drugs and migrants into the country.

Similar to but slightly bigger than standard rigid-hulled inflatable boats, these will complement the work of the cutters, working either in collaboration with them or independently.

The first of these will be in place within the next few months and all will be operational by the end of the year, Border Force said.

Amid the sea of scepticism and criticism, however, the head of the EU's law enforcement agency has insisted Britain has one of the strongest borders on the continent.

Rob Wainwright said: "When you are in the business of targeting your resources where intelligence takes you, then sometimes one or two things will slip through because you are looking elsewhere, for good reason.

"It is worth pointing out that because Britain is an island, because Britain is outside the Schengen zone but also because it has information sharing arrangements with EU partners, it still has one of the strongest borders of any country in Europe.

"That is a consensus view right across Europe.

"What I see, having a pretty good view of people smuggling right across Europe, is that Britain does its job most days very, very well."

Damian Collins, Conservative MP for Folkestone and Hythe, agreed the

investment of tens of millions to improve security in Calais and around the entrance to the Channel Tunnel was encouraging people from migrant camps to take ever more desperate measures to try and arrive in Britain.

However, he was confident the new laws would prove beneficial, and that the government was in good shape to combat the threat.

"The government has always been alert to this risk, which is why the Border Force has patrol vessels which can intercept people at sea," he said.

"The 2016 immigration act, which came into force on Tuesday this week, also gives the Border Force additional maritime enforcement powers to board any vessel and to arrest any individual it suspects of aiding people to enter the UK illegally.

"The Home Office has also made available additional resources to the Border Force to crack down on illegal smuggling gangs.

"Royal Navy frigates, like HMS Sutherland based at Plymouth, can also be called upon to patrol the Channel if required.

"It is too soon to say whether this incident is a new threat to our shores, or one of a few isolated, desperate attempts to reach the UK.

"However, we have to keep the situation under close and constant review.

"If even greater resources are required in the future to try to stop people entering the UK illegally by crossing the Channel in small boats, then they must be made available."

Kent Police was criticised this week after one of its former patrol ships, the

Princess Alexandra III, was listed for sale online at £250,000 - more than double the figure it sold it for at auction two years ago.

However, the force has defended the decision and insisted deploying a vessel to scour the seas for potential migrants does not come under its marine unit's remit, contrary to some reports.

A spokesperson said: "Monitoring immigration and movements through the border are matters for the UK Border Force, who have their own vessels to support this.

"The role of Kent Police's search and marine unit focuses on counter-terrorism work, the protection of waterside critical sites and tackling serious organised crime.

"However, if officers come across immigration related issues while on other duties they will deal accordingly.

"The force took the decision to sell The Princess Alexandra III as the cost of maintaining such a large vessel was not proportionate to the benefits it provided.

"We have other vessels that are cheaper to run and which provide effective capacity.

"The additional benefits of the RHIBs that Kent Police has are that they can be transported by road to be launched from the most suitable location to speed up the response to an incident.

"The sale of this particular vessel generated £100,000 before VAT.

"As with all vehicles, they depreciate in value over time so it is unrealistic to expect that it would be sold at the value it was bought for in 2006."



PROPELLERS: Should the rescue helicopter at Lydd play a role?

Record crowd enjoys breathless action as rallycross roars back

Some 15,000 spectators were in attendance across the bank holiday weekend, more than ever before, to witness two days of bumper-to-bumper action on the track at Lydden Hill's famous race circuit

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

THOUSANDS flocked to Lydden Hill last weekend for what organisers described as "the biggest and best" two days of racing yet.

Saturday and Sunday saw the circuit located between Canterbury and Dover host the World Rallycross of Great Britain in its now traditional bank holiday weekend slot.

Some 15,000 were in attendance across the two days - a record turnout - and fans witnessed some truly breathless bumper-to-bumper action.

Spokesperson John Close told KoS: "It was an excellent weekend and comfortably one of the best events we have had in a long time.

"The support it has all received from both the public and the drivers has been fantastic.

"The MSA [Motor Sports Association] told us they've never seen it that full before so it's great to have generated that kind of support.

"It's getting bigger and better each time and hopefully we'll see more of the same next year."

Rallycross was invented by Robert Reed, who was the producer on ITV's World of Sport programme at the time, and has its roots at the race track in Wootton.

The first event took place at Lydden

Hill on February 4 in 1967, where it quickly became a staple of Saturday afternoon sports in the UK with both ITV and BBC broadcasting the sport.

The popularity of rallycross soon spread, with the first event on the European mainland taking place in Holland in 1969, with the Scandinavian rallycross debut taking place in Sweden two years later.

Rallycross drivers get behind the wheel of supercars packing more than 600bhp and the ability to accelerate from 0-60mph in less than two seconds - faster than an F1 car.

Mr Close told us the sport continues to grow in popularity, and the intimate setting of the circuit in Wootton helped make the event extra special.

"It was great to see such a range of people in attendance," he said.

"It's not just the hardcore rallycross enthusiasts, but we saw plenty of families bring their kids and their dogs and having a great time."

Races tend to last around three and a half minutes - significantly shorter than other motor sports - meaning it's a form of racing that truly appeals to the masses.

Despite rain being predicted, Lydden Hill was basked in nothing but sunshine last weekend, which Mr Close said had a positive impact on the turnout.

World RX managing director Paul Bellamy added: "We were blessed with blue skies, a packed crowd and action-packed racing at our home

ACTION: Lydden Hill was praised by the Motor Sports Association



round of the World Championship at Lydden this weekend.

"The crowd arrived from the early hours to watch qualifying, semi-finals and final and the drivers certainly put on a good show, with some bumper-to-bumper racing and overtaking on Hairy Hill which was surrounded by rallycross fans."

Mattias Ekstrom proved the victor on the track, claiming his third back-to-back victory in the 2016 FIA World Rallycross Championship.

Reigning champion Petter Solberg took the runner-up spot, while Team Peugeot-Hansen driver Timmy Hansen clinched third.

Home favourite Liam Doran - son of legendary racer Pat Doran, who owns the Lydden Hill circuit - had hopes of making the semi-finals but was hampered by a puncture and struggled with engine problems.



BATTLE: Short, fast races ensure spectators are kept entertained



RACE: Cars in action



CIRCUIT: The track at Lydden Hill near Dover is popular among drivers - and pulled in big crowds



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Joust a minute... hundreds head back in time for fun at the castle

Visitors to Leeds Castle experienced a taste of a time gone by during its Grand Medieval Joust event which ran over the bank holiday weekend. Kent on Sunday brings you a taste of the spectacle...

All pictures: ANDY ARCHER

Words: Chris Britcher

KNIGHTS mounted their steeds dressed in full suits of armour as a taste of the medieval era swept in last weekend.

Hundreds of visitors flocked to the picturesque Leeds Castle near Maidstone to enjoy three days of colourful spectacle.

They were able to watch knights go head to head in thrilling recreations of the art of jousting, as well as a variety of other past-times from the era, ranging from archery to cooking.

The Grand Medieval Joust event has become a traditional day out for families with plenty of fun lined up for family members of all ages.

From mini battles for children to the chance to try your hand with a bow and arrow, the aim was to recreate the colourful period in history during the 12th and 15th centuries.

There was even a chance to see a trebuchet shooting into the historic castle's moat

But all eyes were firmly fixed on the main combat arena as the knights charged on horseback at one another

while armed with a wooden jousting lance.

The aim in the past was to unseat your opponent.

Hugely popular during the medieval period, it fell out of flavour by the 17th century – although was phased out in the likes of France in the late 16th century after its King Henry II was speared in the eye by a fragment of a jousting lance, which resulted in his death.

Fortunately there were no such incidents to report last weekend.



STRIKE: Knights see their jousting lances splinter after charging at one another in the combat arena



BOOM! Spectators were able to watch dramatic cannon fire as one of the many attractions last weekend

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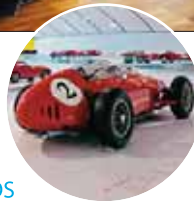
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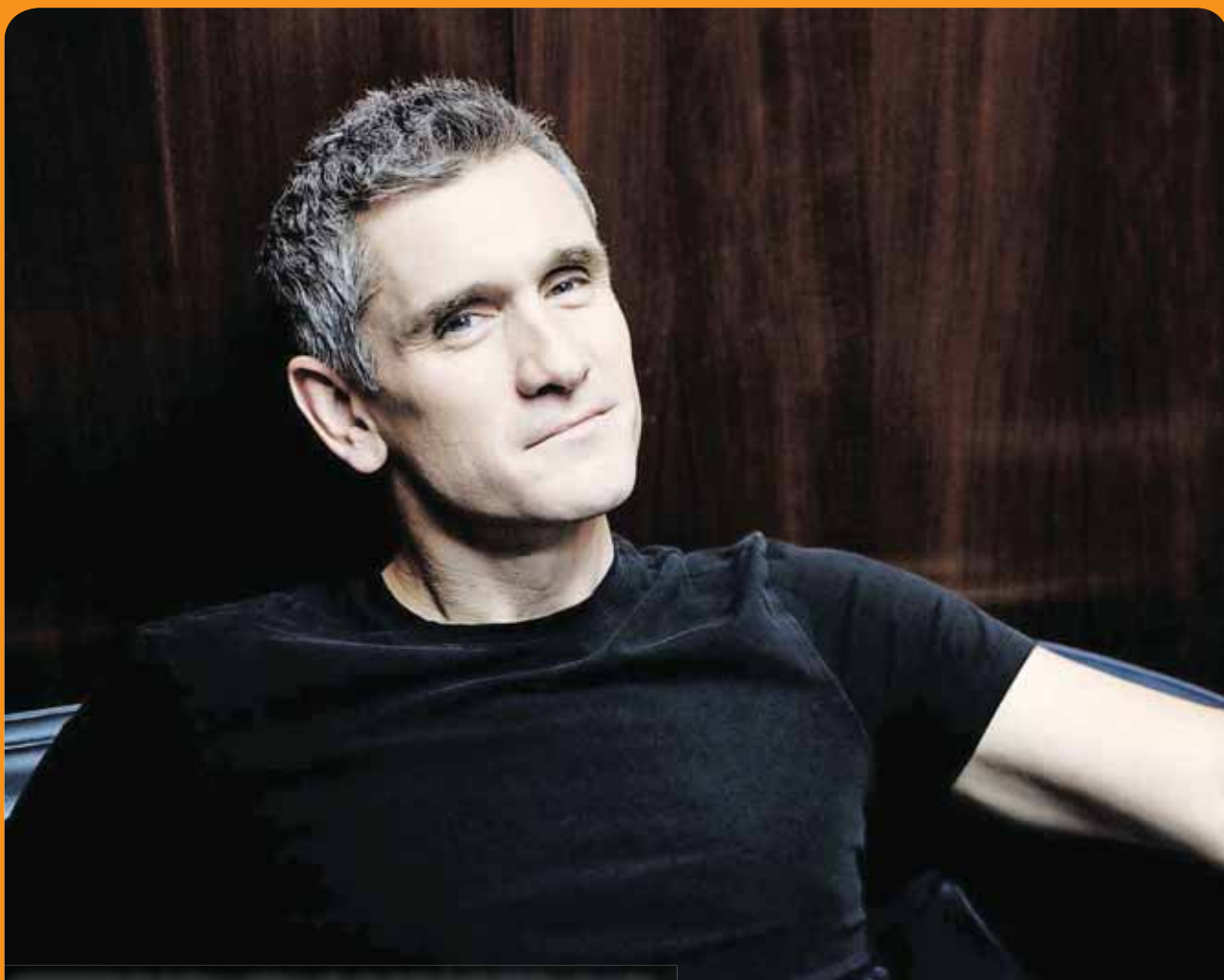
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MUSICAL: Curtis Stigers will be performing in Tunbridge Wells next month

Acclaimed jazz singer Curtis Stigers at the Assembly Hall

Molly Kersey-Law spoke to the singer about his upcoming Kent performance...

ACCLAIMED jazz singer Curtis Stigers will be bringing his live concert to Tunbridge Wells.

The American performer first shot to fame in the early 90s with hit songs including I Wonder Why and You're All That Matters To Me.

He released his self-titled debut album in 1991 and has since performed on stage with a number of musical legends such as Eric Clapton and Elton John.

He will be performing at the Assembly Hall Theatre next month and says that he is looking forward to the upcoming show.

"It's going to be great," he said.

"I have been making records for 25 years so I have got a wide variety of music to draw from.

"I have got a wonderful band that I tour with, a trio all from

New York City.

"I always do I Wonder Why and You're All That Matters To Me and songs like that. I know there's a part of my audience that comes out because they know me from way back then.

"The way we approach music is a lot more acoustic than what I did on my first record, even though I play I Wonder Why I do a version of it that suits the band that I am with. It's not nearly as overcharged as the early 90s pop hits.

"We are jazz musicians but we want to engage the audience. I like an evening of conversation with the audience. We play music that people can relate to."

Mr Stigers has been interested in jazz music from a young age.

"I have been playing jazz all my life. I have always loved different kinds of music.

"When I made my first record I happened to be really spending a lot of time writing pop soul songs and that's where I was at that time, but I have always played jazz and even when I had a big pop career in the 90s I was still sneaking off and doing little jazz gigs to keep my interest piqued.

"Right around 2000 I realised that the pop world wasn't waiting up late asking where my next pop record was.

"We both fell out of love with each other at that time so it made sense to explore making jazz records."

Mr Stigers has released new work almost every year since his recording career began more than 25 years ago.

Speaking about his inspiration for new music, he explained: "I tend to write songs about the

things that are going on in my life or went on in my life last year or the year before.

"My most recent record is an album of 10 beautiful love songs. I made that in response or answer to my previous record. I came out of a very dark period - my divorce. I had a heartbreak but I found my way out of it.

"It's hard for me to listen to music without thinking about the idea of singing and playing those songs. I listen to a lot of songs and it's hard for me to just think 'that's pretty'. Instead I think 'that's pretty, I wonder if I could take it apart and put it back together in one of my records'."

The show will be taking place on July 20 at 7.30pm.

Tickets are £35.

To book call the box office on 01892 530613.

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PAT, petite blonde lady, GSOH, young looking for her age, seeks genuine gent any age with GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422393

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RITA, seeks a genuine male for friendship, days out, shes very friendly, genuine and social, give her a call ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422403

KIM, 32yrs, attractive blonde lady seeks discreet gent for daytime distractions. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3006 Box 421657

MERRY, widow, dark hair, kind and caring, hoping to meet a kind gent for friendship, possibly more. ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422393

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 3010 Box: 409715

BARBARA, is a caring lady who seeks a man to care for, she will do anything to make you happy. Just give her a call today. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422411

LUCY first time advertiser, 32yrs, tall slim blonde airline worker, seeks discreet gent, any status for casual fling. Looks/age unimportant. Tel: 0906 515 3026 Box: 420237

ORIENTAL lady, honest, caring, loves walking, WLTW a reliable, sincere man for LTR. Text only Mailbox: 5443434

50YRS, old attractive lady. Sheila, caring honest, seeks discreet gent. ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422469

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. Tel: 0906 515 3018 Box: 413399

GENUINE, GSH, attractive, outgoing professional female, 55. Enjoys keeping fit, socialising and travel, WLTW similar male for relationship. Text only Mailbox: 5453851

EMILY, mature well educated lady, blonde and smart and broadminded seeks gent any age for no strings fun. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3022 Box 421375

MATURE lady early 80s, family orientated, likes dancing, holidays especially cruising, WLTW similar aged gentleman with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421427

WENDY, mature, passionate ladylike divorcee seeks no strings casual friendship/fun with gent any age. Tel: 0906 515 3034 Box 421605

JO, mature understanding worldly Essex lady, seeks generous gent for regular fetish fantasy role-play, discretion assured. Text only Mailbox: 5320299

JESS, London based but can travel and accommodate, 39yrs, recently single and looking for no strings fun, may lead to more but not yet. Gents 40+ please, open minded, discreet and fun. Box: 4107546 Text only

PAMELA, 33yrs, has a naughty side which she wants to share with similar minded discreet gent. You should be 30+ and have a wicked SOH. Box: 4031004 Text only

FEMALE, blue eyes, slim and pretty, from South Africa, young fifties, seeking a sincere, retired gentleman, who resides close to the sea. Text only Mailbox: 5456242

SINGLE late 60s female, n/s, GSOH, likes going out and being active, not fun on my own, seeking single male, 66-70, n/s, with GSOH, to share each others interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421433

MATURE lady early 80s, family orientated, likes dancing, holidays especially cruising, WLTW similar aged gentleman with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421429

FEMALE, young 58, 5ft, size 14, blonde, bubbly, GSOH, warm, loving, kind and caring, loves music, animals, seaside, looking for that special someone. Text only Mailbox: 4715158

GENUINE single female 49, seeking good-natured, intelligent, polite, single male for friendship/relationship. Text only Mailbox: 4198603

KIND, caring lady of African origin, living in UK for past 20 years, looking for a gentleman who is kind and caring, must have a GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421041

ANGELA, 53, African origin, looking for a kind, genuine, caring gentleman, 60 years +. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421039

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SINGLE slim female, 68, n/s, GSOH, likes cooking, walking etc, seeks male, single, slim 65-70, n/s, with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420091

SLIM female GSOH, 53, Likes walking, pub lunches, days out, looking for soul mate, smart appearance, similar interests N/S GSOH, easy going. Text only to Mailbox no: 4762600

PAT, slim, single, 68, non-smoker, GSOH, likes going for walks etc, seeks male, slim, single, 66-70, non-smoker, clean-shaven, GSOH, with similar interests. Canterbury area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419081

MARION, early 70s, young at heart, GSOH, active, likes walking, gardening, meals out, travel, theatre and animals, looking for male friendship to share interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419657

CHANTELLE, 5ft3 light brown/blonde hair, blue eyes, like nights in/out, walks, animals, romance seeks honest guy. Littlehampton. Text only to Mailbox no: 4923883

MARIE, very lonely middle-aged woman, looking for a kind hearted older man, late 70s/early 80s for friendship/companionship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418955

RACHEL late 40s, blonde, blue eyes and very voluptuous. Looking for a kind, caring honest man. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418741

AMANDA, 36, tall, slim, busty brunette seeks man, any age, any area, for discreet daytime fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418117

HELEN, widow 58, medium build, 5ft 4ins, blonde, GSOH, likes a chat, days out, looking to start again with someone of similar age. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376243

SUE 65, 5ft 8ins, blonde hair, fashionable, smoker, GSOH, enjoys meals out, travel, animals, WLTW kind, shyish man for friendship, maybe more. Thanet area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415735

PROFESSIONAL, romantic male, 44, likes meals out, cinema, music, holidays, seeks female, 30-55 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 250195

CHRIS, from Folkestone, 71, 5ft9, widower, green eyes, lonely, n/s, OHAC, likes gardening, the coast, pubs, dining out, holidays, cruises, days out, WLTW similar lady to share interests, can travel. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422375

PAUL GSOH, 5ft 8ins, medium build, seeking Miss Right for LTR to put the spark back into life. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 391970

MIKE, 64, outgoing person, enjoys life, likes sport, cricket, nice meals out, holidays, WLTW someone to share interests and quality time. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422329

COLIN, 56, 6ft, medium build, clean and tidy with a tidy beard, I'm after some TLC with no strings adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422359

HARLOW male, 40, kind, attractive, happy, considerate looking to meet slim female for LTR, children welcome. Text only Mailbox: 5468389

FRIENDLY passionate male, 55, 6ft, medium build, clean, discreet, lots of TLC to offer, seeks female for fun times. Canterbury Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381222

MATTHEW, five foot eleven, looking for a mature lady for discreet friendship and a few laughs. Dartford area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419469

MALE, 50, GSOH, looking for soul mate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 387485

FEMALE, 59, GSOH, many interests, seeks caring male for fun friendship maybe more, genuine calls only. Text only to Mailbox No: 4819793

GORGEOUS flower, Ashford Kent, 51, larger lady, large personality, easy going, seeks male who likes dogs, animals for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417435

FEMALE easy going, kind, loving, genuine, romantic, car boots, gardening, seeking male with GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417603

PAT, 68, young at heart, slim, proud 4' 11" GSOH, N/S, likes walking etc Whistable area, seeks similar slim easy going male 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419081

PETITE blonde, blue eyes, very feminine and sensual seeks younger male for friendship and discreet fun. Can accommodate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416077

SLIM, 5ft 6 white male WLTW 18 to 42 year old lady for friendship. Text only Mailbox: 5441709

RETIRED, smart, 68 year old, 5ft5, I enjoy eating out, walking, holidays and golf, WLTW a slim, attractive lady, 60-68, for a loving, tender relationship, to enjoy these times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421853

MALE, 55, looking for mature lady for outings and adult fun, easy going, GSOH, nice looking and a bit shy. Text only Mailbox: 4922399

YOUNG 50s male looking for discreet daytime kisses and cuddles with nice female. Kent and Sussex. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421601

FEMININE sensual female, slim, medium build wanted by LTR, kind male for daytime meets, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414809

JIM 45, slim 5'8, blue eyes, short brown hair, very fit, would like to meet older lady for regular N S A fun. East Sussex. Text only Mailbox: 4529089

NEIL, Looking to meet lady for fun, possible LTR with someone special, accom and travel age/looks w/Sussex, unimportant. Text only Mailbox: 4435323

CHRIS widower, likes DIY, gardening, nights out, rock and roll, N/S, looking for LTR with female. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410191

MALE, 6ft, slim, 67, divorced, retired, likes social drinks, meals out, nights in and all other, WLTW lady with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421351

MATURE cross dressing guy, seeking lady willing to apply a full make over and give a manicure and pedicure. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421341

OUTGOING male, seeking attractive female, likes sports, music, cinema and nights out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414793

PAUL 48, 5ft 8ins, GSOH, likes music, cinema, seeks female for fun, friendship and LTR. Tunbridge Wells. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 371985

MALE, 58, very outgoing, looking for attractive female, slim to medium build, for adult fun and maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421883

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KEEN 61, 6ft, slim, likes socialising, drinking, animals, countryside, seaside, meals out, seeks similar lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 333017

SHY male seeks confident, strong willed lady, to take the lead for mutual fun, looks/age unimportant. ACA Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421223

MALE, 50, 6ft 4ins, well built, divorced gent, looking to date calm and kind lovely lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421195

BARRY, 50, 6ft, well-built, seeks lovely lady for good times, loving and enjoying life. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421047

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DAVE 64 solvent, working, not bad looking, would like to meet slim, fun to be with female, 50 to 60, to get to know. Chelmsford area. Text only to Mailbox: 4368820

MALE 38, good-looking, GSOH, seeks lady, 35-55 for laughter and lots of fun. Kent/Sussex. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363901

CALM, kind and good company, male seeking a lovely lady for good times and fun and loving. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419733

PROFESSIONAL gentleman, just retired, own house, likes holidays, reading, cinema, WLTW similar professional lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420676

MALE, 60, medium build, gosh, seeks attractive female, under 50, for no strings, discreet, daytime fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420621



MALE, 54, looking for discreet lady, 60-70, for adult fun and a special friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421085

HEALTHY 61yr old male, N/S, medium build, likes France, cooking, gardening, seeks female, 50-60 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 286360

YOUNG 50s male looking for discreet daytime kisses and cuddles with nice female. Kent and Sussex. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421601

FEMININE sensual female, slim, medium build wanted by LTR, kind male for daytime meets, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414809

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NEIL, Looking to meet lady for fun, possible LTR with someone special, accom and travel age/looks w/Sussex, unimportant. Text only Mailbox: 4435323

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Gay Seeking

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PETER, bi male, aged 68, experienced seeks bi male for fun and friendship. Text only Mailbox: 5459879

MALE medium build, likes outdoors, DIY, seeking slim, N/S guy for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403267

MATURE bi male seeks similar for fun and friendship. Text only Mailbox: 4641909

EASYGOING guy, 62, likes outdoors, countryside, walks, seeks slim, N/S quiet guy for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 334477

GAY male, 68, likes walks, books, seeks N/S guy for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411413

ALAN, 68, straight acting gay man, kind, caring with GSOH, likes sport, art and going on holidays, looking for another gay man. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421529

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Art collection is hand signed by football icon

By Molly Kersey-Law
molly.kersey-law@archant.co.uk

AN art collection celebrating footballer Pelé's successful moments on the pitch has launched at a Greenhithe gallery.

The eight new photographic prints were released by fine art publisher Washington Green.

It is the second instalment of works released in the Art Life Football series.

Each of the pieces has been individually signed by the football icon and will be available to buy at Castle Galleries in Bluewater Shopping Centre.

Pelé, from Brazil, enjoyed a successful career during which he scored 1,283 goals in 1,366 matches. He is the only football player to have won three World Cup tournaments and remains the top scorer in the history of the Brazil National team.

Sporting achievements caught on camera in the new collection include Pelé's goal in the 18th minute during Brazil's 1970s World Cup win and Brazil's pre-game line up – known as 'the beautiful team' – at the Azteca



Stadium in Mexico City.

One of the most famous pictures of the star, this image captures the moment when perspiration on Pelé's chest shaped a heart on his shirt – furthering the legend of Pelé as 'the man of three hearts.'

Pelé said: "My joy, throughout my life, has been football. Success is no accident.

"It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice and most of all, love of what you are doing or learning to do."

Peter Gilby, gallery manager,

said: "The unique range of photography we have chosen to release outlines key moments in Pelé's decorated career. "The selection of pictures – some taken nearly 50 years ago – capture the energy of the nation's favourite sport in action and the grace of the international sporting icon that is Pelé. The highest quality products and printing techniques have been used to create these very special pieces of artwork which are all hand-signed by Pelé himself."



LEGEND: Pelé has had a successful career



ART: The pieces are available at Bluewater's Castle Galleries

A Game of Thrones parody

PARODY show Graeme of Thrones will be performed at the Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells, on June 15.

The show starts at 8pm and tickets are £18.

Call 01892 530613 to book.



Opera due in Folkestone

OPERA and Ballet International will be performing Ellen Kent's production of Aida at the Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone.

It stars French soprano Olga Perrier as Aida and will be performed on December 3.

The show starts at 7.30pm.

Visit www.atgtickets.com/folkestone to book.

New Thanet music event

SOUTHEASTS music festival will be at Birchington's Quex Park on September 24.

Grime and hip hop artist Kano is set to perform.

To book, visit www.southbeatsfestival.com.



Watson discusses identity

COMEDIAN Mark Watson will be bringing his stand-up show - I'm Not Here - to Maidstone.

Mr Watson will be discussing identity in the digital age and a search for the meaning in life.

He will be at the Hazlitt Theatre on June 12.

Tickets are £18.50.

Visit www.parkwoodtheatres.co.uk to book.

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Wolf Alice due in Margate

BAND Wolf Alice have been added to the line up of this year's By The Sea festival - which runs at Margate's Dreamland from September 30 to October 1.

Day tickets are £37.50.



Frazey Ford in Folkestone

FOLK-POP singer and songwriter Frazey Ford will be performing at the Folkestone Quarterhouse next month.

The show takes place on July 14 at 7.30pm.

For more details, or to book, visit www.quarterhouse.co.uk or call the box office on 01303 760750.

Tina Turner songs relived

TRIBUTE show Simply The Best - The Tina Turner Experience will be performed at the Theatre Royal Margate on August 18 at 7.30pm.

To book tickets, call the box office on 01843 292795.



Play looks at modern love

A PLAY exploring modern love will be performed at Canterbury's Marlowe Theatre.

Ross and Rachel has been created by Olivier award-nominated playwright James Fritz and it stars Molly Wevers.

It will be performed on June 17 at 8pm. Call 01227 787787 to book.

Harold Pinter's dark play The Birthday Party due in Margate

By Molly Kersey-Law

molly.kersey-law@archant.co.uk

DARKLY comic Harold Pinter play The Birthday Party will be performed on stage in Margate during its tour of the UK.

Set in a shabby boarding house in a small seaside town, the play tells the story of an elderly couple - Meg and Petey - who are taking care of solitary guest Stanley, who rarely ever ventures outside.

One day, two charming strangers arrive at the house - offering a distraction from their mundane lives. However, when a seemingly innocent birthday party erupts into a game of cat and mouse there are horrifying repercussions.

The play, which was originally written in 1958, was Mr Pinter's first major work.

Declan Rodgers, Ged McKenna and Jonathan Ashley will star in the show, which will be coming to 37 venues during its tour.

Mr Ashley said: "The Birthday Party is a brilliant play - it's darkly comic, hugely entertaining and has great depth."



SINISTER: The Birthday Party will be performed at the Theatre Royal Margate

"Its meaning is intentionally ambiguous and intriguing, but on one level, I think that Pinter may be writing about the torment of an individual who strays against the norms of a threateningly conformist society, represented in this case by a sinister 'organisation' that comes to call."

"Using comedy, a sinister atmosphere and elements of shock, it

deals with the universal anxiety of the past catching up, the fear of the unexpected 'knock on the door'."

"I'm playing Goldberg, senior of the two charming yet dangerous visitors, and he's a great creation by Pinter - mysterious, powerful, deadly. It's a role that mixes menace with comedy, a theatrical style I love."

Mr McKenna will play Petey and

Mr Rodgers will play McCann.

The Birthday Party will be directed by Michael Cabot.

It will be performed at the Theatre Royal Margate on June 10 at 7.30pm.

Tickets to the show are £16 or £14 with concessions.

For further details or to book you can visit www.theatreroyal-margate.com.

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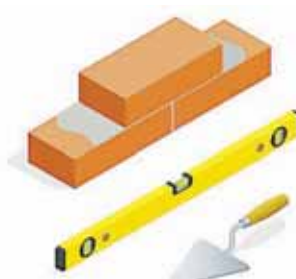
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Three 'B's that hold key to helping tots to sleep

The bath, book and bed routine can help parents and children explains successful TV nanny Jo Frost

EXHAUSTED parents of babies and young children say they would pay thousands to end sleepless nights.

But TV nanny Jo Frost insists they don't need to pay a penny to get a decent night's sleep - just stringently adhere to the routine of bath, book, bed with their child.

Ms Frost is supporting the new BookTrust Bath Book Bed campaign to encourage the fundamental bedtime routine, which will help all the family sleep well, encourage a love of reading, and promote the bond between parent and child.

Ms Frost, who found fame in TV's *Supernanny*, says: "Sleep deprivation is the most common complaint I hear

from parents of young children.

"Tired parents and tired children is a recipe for disaster."

"But the solution doesn't need to be complicated regimes or expensive gizmos," she added. "A routine as simple as bath, book, bed can get young children to settle so everyone can benefit from a good night's sleep."

A survey of a thousand parents with children aged three and under by the reading charity BookTrust found 78 per cent believe lack of sleep is the hardest part of being a new parent, with many claiming they'd pay more than £10,000 to put an end to sleepless nights.

More than half of parents (60 pc) say they want guidance on having a consistent and successful routine to



SLEEP: Jo Frost is supporting BookTrust's new campaign

get their child to sleep at night, which prompted BookTrust to team up with Frost to launch Bath Book Bed.

Ms Frost, who has been a nanny for more than 20 years, says: "Story time is an integral part of a bedtime routine - it strengthens children's vocabulary and literacy skills, and enables them to foster a love of reading."

"Kids need to feel safe and secure when they sleep, and when you spend quality time reading stories to them, you wind yourself down as well as your children through the love of storytelling."

She explained that the safe feeling which is provided by the routine not only helps children get to sleep, but relaxes them enough to give them a sound night's sleep and

helps prevent night waking.

"The routine helps them wind down, and there are fewer interruptions during the night because there's less anxiety as parents have given them their loving time before they go to sleep, and the child feels settled."

Ms Frost advises parents to read to babies as soon as they're born, because the rhythm, tone and repetition helps establish a healthy routine and love for reading straight away.

"Once they've had that from such a young age it becomes an enjoyable part of their life," she says.

"Parents think there's some magic fairy dust that will help kids sleep, and there isn't - what you need is bath, book and bed. Encouraging parents to do it is a big deal."

Coastal festival begins

THE eighth edition of contemporary art festival the Whitstable Biennale will be running until June 12.

It has the theme The Faraway Nearby and features commissions from 15 artists including Mikhail Karikis and Tessa Lynch.

The event takes place in various locations around Whitstable.

For further information about the event, visit www.whitstablebiennale.com.

TV stars at Kent show

BITAIN'S Got Talent finalists the Bolddog Lings Freestyle Motocross (FMX) Display Team will be performing at the Kent County Show from July 8 to 10.

They will be in the Astor Ring riding the latest Honda motorcycles and taking part in a display of aerial stunts.

The three-day event takes place in Detling, Maidstone, opening at 8am and staying open until 6pm.

Hits of Dirty Dancing

MUSICAL show A Night of Dirty Dancing will be performed at the Woodville, Gravesend, on June 15.

The show celebrates the soundtrack of the hit 1987 film starring Jennifer Grey and Patrick Swayze.

It will be starting at 7.30pm and tickets range from £19 to £21.

For more details, or to book, you can visit www.woodville.co.uk.

Musical's Dartford run

JACKIE the Musical will be running at Dartford's Orchard Theatre from June 14 to 18.

The show stars Janet Dibley, Graham Bickley and Nicholas Bailey.

Performances will be taking place at 2.30pm and 7.30pm and tickets range from £18 to £35.

For more information, visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk.

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We are delighted to announce the launch of the Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards 2016



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NOMINATIONS are now being invited for the 2016 Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards. The awards dinner will take place at Ashford International Hotel on October 17 from 6.30pm to midnight.

The prestigious awards, which launched in 2013, are designed to champion, highlight and offer a showcase to the great and the good of the region's food and drink industry, including local producers and suppliers, small farming businesses, chefs, restaurants, pubs, cafes and hoteliers.

All will be people who care about the countryside and the future of our local environment.

The companies included will all be nominated by you, our Kent Life and Kent on Sunday readers.

We want to know if you've enjoyed a fantastic meal at your local pub or have been impressed by the produce

and service at your neighbourhood farmers' market or farm shop.

The nomination form is available here and will be repeated. It is also available to complete online at kentfda.co.uk, where you can read more about the awards and see pictures of last year's winners.

Entries close on August 7. Our handpicked panel of high-profile judges who all live or work in Kent will then select a shortlist, starting the independent judging process where finalists will be visited or interviewed to determine a worthy winner in each category.

All finalists will be invited to the prestigious awards ceremony, where they will enjoy a reception and three-course meal with wine before finding out if they are a winner.

This is our fourth Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards and we are immensely proud to be able to offer you once again the opportunity to reward and recognise

the deserving businesses within our local food and drink industry that go above and beyond expectations.

These awards are what you make of them so if you are the owner of a restaurant, a chef or local producer then spread the word among your clients, customers and visitors.

It takes no time at all to make your nomination. You can email, post or nominate online.

We are looking for quality over quantity, focusing on good comments rather than simply the number of nominations received, so everybody is in with a chance no matter how big or small their business.

■ Don't forget to let us know when you have made your recommendation on our Twitter page @kentlife and @KOSMedia by using #kentfda – similarly, if you are looking for nominations, please use this hashtag

Kent Life and
Kent on Sunday
Food & Drink
Awards 2016
Nomination Form

Nominate your Kent food and drink favourites by using this form or email us at kentfda@archant.co.uk

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Or you can email us at:
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Copies of the form and posters to advertise your entry are available ___at www.kent-life.co.uk and at www.kentnews.co.uk.

The closing date for entries is Sunday, August 7, 2016

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NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR



This popular category is open to anyone in the food and drink industry who has started a new venture within the last 18 months.

We want to know what impact they have made on the local community and if they have started to achieve any success further afield.

Are they helping to promote Kent food and drink to a new audience or have they found a new way to promote an old favourite?

INDEPENDENT FOOD OR DRINK RETAILER OF THE YEAR



This celebrates that special food or drink shop that we all treasure.

The retailer who includes wonderful local produce in their offering and knows where all their stock comes from to make that special link between field and plate.

Our winner will have a special 'must-have' range as well as making a real contribution to their local community.

Paying a visit to their shop will be a treat in itself.

CAFE OF THE YEAR



This category has changed from the previous Tea Shop of the Year to include places that also specialise in coffee! Tea and coffee shops are an integral

part of the Kent food and drink scene. Who makes the best tea and coffees, serves the nicest cakes and biscuits and the freshest scones? Are the sandwiches freshly cut and liberally filled?

Most importantly, are most of the ingredients locally sourced? We look forward to hearing your favourites.

FOOD PRODUCER OF THE YEAR



This category celebrates our local producers.

We are looking for someone who consistently provides both top quality local produce and service to their customers.

We are also keen to hear of any innovations.

If they're doing something new, we'd like to hear about it.

So if your local baker, grocer or farmer delights then please let us know.

DRINK PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

This category celebrates our local drink producers.

Whether it's gorgeous Kentish fizz or delicious juice, we want to find the producers who play such a vital role in the county's food and drink economy.

We want to know who you think makes the best drink, alcoholic or not, in the county, and what it is that makes it so special.

We are keen to hear of any innovations, so if they're doing something new, for example, introducing a fabulous new flavour, then we would like to all hear about it.

FARM SHOP OF THE YEAR

A good farm shop needs to have that extra-special something to tempt farmers away from their local supermarkets.

Are the staff friendly and knowledgeable, is the range of produce and the layout of an excellent standard, does your local farm shop offer a box scheme?

Is most of the produce sold there grown or raised on that farm, or nearby and if not would the owner be able to tell you where it is from?

Nominate your favourite farm shop now.

FARMERS' MARKET OF THE YEAR



The key to a good farmers' market is not only the range of produce and the quality of its stalls but also the principles that it supports - for example, does it work as a co-operative with other farmers? Is most of the produce sold there grown or raised locally? Are the stallholders welcoming and knowledgeable? Let us know so we can tell everyone the best place to go.

PUB OF THE YEAR



A good pub these days has to offer more than a warm welcome and excellent ale. We're looking for an inn that also offers delicious locally-sourced food, fantastic

customer service and real value for money. Pubs are genuinely the hub of their local community.

If you know a great one, even if it isn't your local, let us all know.

RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR



The Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Restaurant of the Year needs to offer an

incomparable dining experience, from the ambience to the service and most importantly the food. Is it locally sourced? Do they support local producers and are they recognised on the menu? Do they have local as well as international wines and champagnes and can the staff tell you more if you ask?

CHEF OF THE YEAR



Kent is blessed with some outstanding chefs working in a fantastic array of restaurants. The Chef of the Year should be someone who has devoted him or herself to serving the best possible food. They'll demonstrate technical ability, use of seasonal ingredients, presentation of the food and an understanding of how flavours work together. Above all, we are looking for passion - that magic ingredient that defines true greatness in the kitchen.

CUSTOMER SERVICE OF THE YEAR



Most of our awards recognise customer

service in some form. This category celebrates this vital element for its own sake.

Do you know a person, organisation or establishment that offers fabulous service that goes above and beyond what you expect?

We all know excellent service when we have received it, now is your chance to get it recognised. If you know a person, company, producer, pub, shop or restaurant that is a delight to deal with, then let us know.

KENT FOOD AND DRINK HERO OF THE YEAR

Kent has a food and drink scene that is among the most vibrant in the UK - as you would expect from the Garden of England.

As well as being blessed with some of the final local produce around, the county also has a variety of fantastic eateries located in local towns and villages.

This category will be celebrating the individual who has made a positive impact on the county's food or drink community.

Do you know someone who goes the extra mile in order to help promote Kent to a wider audience?

Someone who has shown that they are passionate about local produce throughout?

Now is the chance for you to nominate your very own Kent Food and Drink hero and give them the recognition that they deserve.

Get in contact with us and let us know who you think would be a worthy winner.



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Guess what this letter's about?

SHOULD the electorate choose to remain in the EU then the centuries of struggle to enable the British people to be in control of their lives will have been in vain.

From Magna Carta, when the power of the monarch first began to be limited, through the reformation, when the secular power of Rome was renounced, the Civil War, when an end to the concept of the divine right of kings was won by Parliament, the glorious revolution, which confirmed the position of the latter, and the extension of the franchise by the great reform acts of the 19th century and the efforts of those such as the Chartists, trade unions and suffragettes, all led to the position where the people were sovereign. However within the EU the executive is unelected, accountable to no one and immune to the wishes of the ordinary citizens.

This would be not only a betrayal of our generation and all those to follow but also of those who died to defeat Philip II, Louis XIV, Napoleon, the Kaiser and Hitler in order, as Lincoln famously said, in the context of the American Civil War, "government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth".

This is the real heart of the matter, not the alarmist nonsense the remain campaign hopes will frighten the people into voting to turn their backs on freedom and democracy.

Colin Bullen,
Tonbridge

It's all about the immigration

MANY people are still confused over opposing claims of continued EU membership, hence it difficult for them to make a decision.

But one basic statistic they should remember, is the ever increasing immigration figure, which now stands at 330,000 annually (once those who have left has been taken off).

This means a population growth of over one million every three years.

With social services, the NHS, schools and a transport systems already at bursting point and creaking at the seams, what future are we handing over to our children and grand-children, as the countryside and agricultural land is concreted over, just for Britain become the housing estate of Europe?

Terry Hudson,
Whitstable

LETTER OF THE WEEK



Government erodes clout of democracy

PRITI Patel MP says "Brexit means more focus on local projects" [KoS, last week]; this is a bold claim from a minister whose government is determined to emasculate councils elected by local people to care for local communities.

At both county and district level in Kent, people are being disenfranchised as central government denies funding, levers away authority and converts the delivery of local services to more and more unaccountable organisations.

The government has been forced to U turn on compelling all schools to become academies but their intentions are clear. The deep budget cuts have led KCC to adopt a commissioning system that transfers the delivery of social care to private sector providers, just as private companies like Virgin are being encouraged to take on NHS contracts.

Elected councillors, meanwhile, lose more and more influence over

policing and fire services, as the government continues with the inadequate experiment with police and crime commissioners.

At district council level, locally elected members are losing control of the planning system, firstly by the imposition of unsustainable local plans that do not reflect the needs of our communities and secondly through the housing and planning act which will massively reduce the freedom of local planning committees to control development in their districts.

Priti Patel's agenda is really about increasing the power of Westminster, on the one hand at the expense of local democracy and on the other by reducing the responsibility of national politicians to co-operate with European countries over the likes of trade, working conditions, women's rights, crime and the environment.

Roger Truelove
Sittingbourne

to do their job properly.

Dover's Conservative majority insisted that the motion go to the scrutiny committee for more detailed examination of the issues. After the scrutiny committee had taken all the evidence possible, the committee supported the original provisions of the motion.

At no point did the scrutiny process identify withdrawal from the EU as a means of improving the care of live animals during transportation. It did, however, propose working with the UK and EU governments to improve the way in which the laws were

applied. The scrutiny committee's recommendations were accepted by the district council.

I am pleased {South Thanet MP} Craig Mackinlay has taken up the issue, but it remains a fact that 10-minute bills rarely succeed and their success does not depend on the EU but on the UK government's timetable.

Sadly, leaving the EU is unlikely to improve the welfare of animals being transported long distances. If Mr Mackinlay's bill becomes law, it could stop the trade through the east Kent ports but it won't stop the trade within the EU. Nor will it do anything to stop the trade being re-routed via the UK's land border between Northern Ireland and an EU state, Ireland.

Before Ireland and the UK joined the EU legal, and illegal, movements of animals across the border were commonplace.

A sea route from Ireland to ports on the continental mainland will be much more stressful to the animals, not to mention the additional land journeys. And leaving the EU will give us no chance of influencing the EU.

Mike Eddy,

Labour leader of the opposition,
Dover District Council

Don't make me write in again...

I'M sorry Mr Duff [Kos letters, last week] but there is no point staying in the EU to campaign for reform - there won't be any. The big guns from the establishment, from within the EU and outside it, want us to remain for their benefit.

They need our subscription to a club that is fast becoming an economic basket case. Small wonder thousands of young people from southern Europe are coming to the UK to find work.

If we stay, immigration figures will not fall. Pressure on our housing, the NHS, schools and jobs will increase. We have no control over migrants from the EU and it is disgraceful that Mr Cameron perpetuates that particular lie.

If we leave, we will continue to trade around the world, including the EU. Floods, plague and pestilence will not befall us and we do not need trade agreements in order to trade. The EU share of world trade, 31 per cent in 1980, less than 20 per cent in 2014 will continue its decline and hit 10 per cent by 2039. Why would we want to be part of that?

I really don't want to write in again in a few years just to say 'I told you so'.

Malcolm Brockman,
Loose

Stop bleating over EU exit

I AM grateful to Reg Bell of Thanet Against Live Exports for reminding your readers [KoS letters, last week] of the motion the Labour group put to Dover District Council back in July 2013.

There is no need for me to "study" the original motion as I proposed it. It asked for the 1847 act allowing live animal exports to be amended to prevent the live animal trade and for the RSPCA inspectors to be able

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles

Kent on Sunday will:

- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.

- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to

people living in the county.

9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.

10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.



Belmont House, near Faversham by **Brian Summers**

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CITY SLICKER: the i10



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RACY SUPERMINI: the i20 Coupe

Hyundai keeps turning and churning

BRAND UPDATE: Korean brand's mastery of innovation and five-year production cycles has rocketed it into the UK car market sales top ten...

HYUNDAI makes me think 'rotation and revolution' – and I'm not talking about what goes on beneath the bonnet.

It describes how this under-rated Korean brand has leapt from a decidedly dodgy entry to our market in 1982, to celebrate a million UK car sales earlier this year.

It has done so by rapid rotation of models – usually every five years – and a revolutionary approach to designing new models rather than merely 'evolving' them from their predecessors – as so many rivals do.

Hyundai's first car was the Pony, South Korea's first mass-produced car, a crude rear-wheel drive effort borrowing heavily from ageing British Leyland engineering and management.

It was only a slightly better than Iron Curtain dross of that era such as the Skoda Estelle, Lada Riva and Yugo series and it was a long time before Hyundai really started to gain ground here, but it's motoring now; 600,000 of its UK sales have been since 2005 and it is now the UK market's 10th biggest brand, with one of the youngest line-ups.

The newest addition is the Tucson junior SUV, a perfect example of rotation and revolution: its ix35 predecessor was no slouch, yet lasted the usual five years before being axed – well before its time – and replaced by the demonstrably superior Tucson, itself a huge leap ahead of a 2004-9



NEWEST ADDITION:
the stylish Tucson SUV

namesake. That story can be re-told across the Hyundai range, which also has one of the best warranties around: five years/unlimited miles.

Indeed, it is a worry that a relatively young brand like Hyundai from a nation of 51 million,

can make and sell cars so well to a country of 65 million that taught manufacturing to the world yet systematically trashed its own motor industry.

Meanwhile, Hyundai's second million UK sales is surely not far off.

The Skyactiv pioneer is now even better

Mazda's CX-5 was the 'prototype' for the Japanese marque's impressive Skyactiv tech – newly updated, it's still a brilliant showcase writes **Steve Loader...**

MAZDA has transformed its fortunes since 2012 when it launched a new 'Skyactiv' suite of technologies.

Recognising that hybrid and electric development was too expensive then for this relatively small Japanese brand, Mazda chose instead to squeeze as much as possible from existing know-how.

The brand's engineers shaved weight obsessively in every department, fine-tuned aerodynamics, and hunted big efficiencies and eco benefits in powertrains.

This brainstorming was labelled SkyActiv and first applied to the CX-5 crossover/SUV. It was an instant star and the same formula has benefited all subsequent Mazdas, creating one of the best and most advanced ranges on the market.

But that was 2012: has this 'Skyactiv prototype' - kept up in a fast-moving market? Absolutely, helped by a judicious facelift last year.

In truth, Mazda could easily have rested on its laurels, but the interior is a little more luxurious than before and there's more stowage – following customer feedback.

Sound insulation, refinement and ride comfort is also better, styling tweaks have harmonised the looks,



creature comfort and safety specs are high, and the CX-5 line-up looks great value from £22,995.

The well-arranged fascia has gained Mazda's MZD-Connect infotainment set-up; integrated 7-inch colour touchscreen with digital radio and Bluetooth, online, music and social media connectivity.

But it's the CX-5's overall feel good factor that has risen hugely; like its newer and smaller brother, the CX-3, it needs just a light touch to navigate tortuous lanes.

For a high-riding SUV-style wagon it also keeps a flat stance on corners, despite the facelift's chassis work, designed to make the ride suppler.



Available in more economical front-wheel drive or 4x4, it's very much down to what the buyer requires: best economy or the occasional need to venture onto rougher surfaces.

The CX-5 is not intended to be an off-roader, but the 4x4 can match any other 'soft-roader' while setting

Car

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|-----------------|--------------|
| Price: | from £20,000 |
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| Image: | ★★★★ |
| Space: | ★★★★ |
| Value: | ★★★★★ |
| Running costs: | ★★★★ |
| How green?: | ★★★★ |
| Best rival: | hyhyhyh |

the highest standards on-road and outclassing the original of its type, the Toyota RAV4.

The test car was a 4x4 mated with the excellent 173bhp 2.2 diesel and a slick-shifting six-speed manual 'box' - experience shows it's pretty much the optimum combination.

Able to shame rivals costing far more, the engine is smooth, flexible and economical and 136g/km of CO2 emissions – incurring £130/year road tax – are modest for what it delivers.

And while the driver is happy, so should everyone else be: the cabin is roomy across the back and all three seats can be folded individually for flexible loading, using Mazda's pioneering quick release system.

But this space is not at the expense of the boot, one of the best in class at 503 litres, or 1,620 with all seats down, loading being eased by a relatively low boot height.



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How Motability crushed the Invacar

TRANSPORT aid for the disabled used to be limited to those who could drive themselves.

And this was usually in the form of a notoriously unstable three-wheeler 'Invacar', with a lot of in-built stigma but room for the driver only - not much use for families - and a tendency to tip over on corners or in high winds.

That changed with the launch of the Government-backed Motability charity in 1978,

which calculated an allowance that disabled people could use towards a vehicle of their choice.

The blue Invacar was made obsolete at a stroke - but only finally outlawed from UK roads in 2003 - and opened up transport to

disabled people who couldn't drive themselves.

Since then, more than three million cars, scooters and powered wheelchairs have been sourced through Motability, allowing the disabled to go shopping, do voluntary work, visit friends, go to the doctor, do sport, give a family member a lift, or go on holiday - things the motoring majority takes for granted.

Liberated by their new mobility, some users have even been able to take up further education or pursue better jobs and careers.

The scheme was modified recently though, to speed procedures and prevent misuse creeping into the system.

The key changes were:

- Streamlining the list of cars available
 - Nominated drivers must live at or within five miles of the applicant's address, though special circumstances will be considered
 - Drivers under 25 are restricted to cars with an insurance group of 16 or lower and with a power output of 115bhp or less
 - Drivers under 21 are only permitted to drive Motability vehicles in cases where they live with the disabled customer.
- For more about this liberating scheme for disabled people, see inside this special supplement



SUCH VARIETY: Invacar users would have been amazed that they could have cars like the versatile Nissan Qashqai crossover or chic Renault Clio supermini



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2016 Yaris Hybrid Icon 5 door 1.5 VVT-i Auto. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 91.1 (3.1), Extra Urban 85.6 (3.3), Combined 85.6 (3.3). CO₂ Emissions 75g/km. AYGO x-pression 5 door 1.0 VVT-i x-shift. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 56.5 (5.0), Extra Urban 78.5 (3.6), Combined 68.9 (4.1). CO₂ Emissions 95g/km. 2016 Yaris Icon 5 door 1.4 D-4D Manual. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 67.3 (4.2), Extra Urban 91.1 (3.1), Combined 80.7 (3.5). CO₂ Emissions 91/km. Auris Icon 5 door 1.6 D-4D Manual. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 55.4 (5.1), Extra Urban 74.3 (3.8), Combined 65.7 (4.3). CO₂ Emissions 108g/km. Auris Touring Sports Icon 5 door 1.2 VVT-i Manual. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 42.8 (6.6), Extra Urban 58.9 (4.8), Combined 51.4 (5.5). CO₂ Emissions 126g/km. Auris Hybrid Icon 5 door 1.8 VVT-i Auto. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 80.7 (3.5), Extra Urban 80.7 (3.5), Combined 78.5 (3.6). CO₂ Emissions 82g/km. Verso Icon 7-Seat 1.6 V-matic Manual. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 32.8 (8.6), Extra Urban 49.6 (5.7), Combined 41.5 (6.8). CO₂ Emissions 157g/km. All mpg and CO₂ figures quoted are sourced from official EU regulated laboratory test results. These are provided to allow comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect your actual driving experience.

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Motability fact file

UP to two nominated drivers can drive a Motability vehicle, but the disabled person qualifying for the scheme does not have to be one of them. The drivers may be friends or relatives, and parents or carers can apply on behalf of a child aged three years or older. The car only has to be used for the benefit of the disabled person,

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*For more information go to www.motability.co.uk

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Fuel consumption figures for the Fiat 500L range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 34.4 (8.2) – 62.8 (4.5); Extra Urban 56.5 (5.0) – 78.5 (3.6); Combined 45.6 (6.2) – 72.4 (3.9). CO₂ emissions 144 – 104 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO₂ figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. *Vehicles shown are Fiat 500L Pop Star 1.3 MultiJet 95hp with NIL Advance Payment, plus Fiat 500L Trekking 1.4 95hp with NIL Advance Payment and Fiat 500L MPW Lounge 1.3 MultiJet 95hp with Advance Payment of £295, both featured with optional Bicolour paint at additional cost. The Fiat 500L MPW boot space is based on 5 seat version with rear seats pulled forward. *Based on 5+2 seat version. 5 standard seats and two extra seats for persons up to 1.65m. Advance Payments are correct at time of going to press and subject to orders being placed by 30th June 2016. Not available in conjunction with any other offer. Terms & Conditions apply. Offer may be varied and withdrawn at any time. Subject to stock availability.

Test drives are vital



HERE are our top tips to make the most of your test drives...

Plan carefully

- drive your chosen candidates soon after one another to promote more accurate comparisons.

Allow time – you need enough to drive in all situations: town traffic, on the motorway or a fast road, and on less well-maintained rural roads. An hour should be sufficient, as long as you avoid getting stuck in a rush hour jam.

What are you looking for?

- seat and ride comfort, plus how refined it is in terms of engine, wind, tyre and mechanical noise. And especially...

Do you like the controls?

- many carmakers are going their own way in search of the best

ergonomics or human interaction with the controls, but they don't suit everyone. If need be, can they be adapted to your needs?

Make it a family outing - it can be a painful process of 'are we there yet?'

proportions, but try to get as many of the other would-be car users involved in the test drive - drivers and non-drivers - as well as the disabled person, and is it practical for him or her to use, or will major adaptations be needed?

Is it the right specification?

- try to get a test car as close to the one you are interested in, even if you have to wait a few days for the dealer to arrange it or have to go to another dealership. Chances are the dealer will have a higher spec model than the one you want, it's then easier to be seduced by the car.



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The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the cars shown are: urban 68.9 (4.1)–80.7 (3.5); extra-urban 78.5 (3.6)–91.1 (3.1); combined 74.3 (3.8)–85.6 (3.3). The official CO₂ emissions are 99–85g/km. EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008 test environment figures. Fuel consumption and CO₂ may vary with driving styles, road conditions and other factors.

*Advance payment offers are only valid for Motability applications to 30 June 2016 and are correct at time of going to press.  Motability is a trademark of Motability. Registered charity number 299745.

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Working hours are 37.5 hours p/w, term time only. Candidates should be HCPC registered Educational Psychologists. The successful candidate will work as part of a multi-professional team at the school. Benefits include: Local Authority pension scheme, induction training, performance management programme and Continuous Professional Development. Visits to the school are welcomed.

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Closing Date: 26th May 2016

For an application pack, or to make an appointment to visit, please contact Mrs Linda Taylor, Business Manager, Abbey Court School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent, ME2 3SP (01634 338236), stating the position for which you are applying.

Please note CV's will not be accepted.

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LICENSING ACT 2003:

Application for Premises Licence

East Kent College of The Yarrow Hotel, Ramsgate Road, Broadstairs, Kent CT10 1PN has applied to Thanet District Council, P.O. Box 9, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent for the Grant of a Premises Licence under the Licensing Act 2003. A copy of the application may be inspected during normal office hours at the Thanet District Council offices, address above. The licensable activities will be Live Music from 07:00 to 23:00hrs Sunday to Thursday and 07:00 to 00:00hrs on Friday and Saturday; Recorded Music from 07:00 to 00:00 every day; Performances of Dance from 08:00 to 23:00hrs Sunday to Thursday and 08:00 to 00:00hrs on Friday and Saturday;

Late Night Refreshment from 23:00 to 05:00hrs every day; Supply of Alcohol from 07:00 to 03:00hrs every day (24 hours a day to hotel residents). All Licensable activities to continue for one extra hour on Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve, St. Patrick's Day and the Sunday of the May and August Bank Holiday weekends. Any representations in respect of the application should be made in writing to the Licensing Department, Thanet District Council, P.O. Box 9 Cecil Street, Margate, Kent by 10th June 2016. It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application and the maximum fine for which a person is liable on summary conviction for the offence is £5000.

**Goods Vehicle
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C J Smith of Martland House, Chapel Lane, Sissinghurst, Kent TN17 2JN is applying for a licence to use Weald Granary, Seven Mile Lane, Mereworth ME18 5PZ as an operating centre for 2 goods vehicles and 2 trailers Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.



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Billings buzzing to be back in Kent

Wicketkeeper has enjoyed an IPL stint but is glad to be home

Cricket

By Mark Pennell

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

WICKETKEEPER Sam Billings says he hopes to take the experience gained overseas to the domestic pitch after returning to Kent this week.

Recently returned from a five-game stint with Indian Premier League franchise, The Delhi Daredevils, 24-year-old Billings impressed in the county championship draw with Leicestershire having spent much of the winter overseas with the England World Cup squad as well as a short spell in the UAE-based Pakistan Super League.

"It's great to come back to a winning Kent side, an unbeaten team who've enjoyed a phenomenal start the season," he said.

"I've been keeping track of the performances through the internet and social media and the boys have been exceptional.

"It is a different world in India, not just the cricket, but everything that surrounds the game – you're totally in a bubble.

"I remember sitting down with Rahul Dravid, our batting coach with Delhi, to have dinner and in half-an-hour I'd say around 50 people came up and asked for a photo and Rahul obliged them all.

"But in the end we had to have our security man come and sit on the table just so we could eat.

"I reckon that until I scored a 50 in my first game the people thought I was the team physio.

"After the 50 though it went crazy with fans wanting photos, auto-



BACK: Kent wicketkeeper Sam Billings has returned after months overseas

graphs and shirts.

"They'd call after me 'Billing, Billing' instead of Billings, but at least they got part of my name right by the end.

"It's something akin to playing international cricket, in fact, for some of the IPL games you have an audi-

ence of 1.4 billion watching on TV or tuning in on radios, as well as a full house in the stadium of course.

"If you can perform under those conditions and under that weight of pressure then you're far more likely to replicate your game when it comes to international or domestic cricket."

Snodland star Hennon suffers first pro defeat

Boxing

SNODLAND welterweight George Hennon suffered the first defeat of his professional career on Saturday when he was beaten at the SSE Hydro in Glasgow.

Unbeaten Scot Sam Ball was victorious on the undercard of Ricky Burns' headline fight with Michele Di Rocco in front of the Sky Sports cameras, after forcing a stoppage in the third round.

Hennon, who had won each of his previous three bouts going into the fight, had his man over in the first round with a sweet overhand right but met the canvas himself in the following round, and again in the third, under fire from heavy body shots from the eight-time Scottish



LOSS: George Hennon

national amateur champion.

Despite beating the referee's count, the fight was waved off midway

through the penultimate round.

The 21-year-old said post-fight: "We're taking loads of positives from this because I gave a good account of myself.

"Johnny [Greaves, his trainer] and I spoke to Sam afterwards and he told us he had never been put down in his career before, and I put him down in the first round.

"He got in the ring at 11st-11lbs; he was just too big for me."

"It's all about learning but I'll celebrate like it was a victory.

"He said he was the first Scottish amateur to beat a Cuban boxer and he wants to come down to London for some sparring."

Upbeat Hennon now looks towards his next outing on July 1 in Essex on the Carl Greaves show titled 'The Future'.

Sport Shorts

» Email sports@kosmedia.co.uk
or call Tom Pyman on 01233653477

Teen midfielders sign contracts at Priestfield

GILLINGHAM have announced that teenage midfielder Darren Oldaker has signed a professional contract at Priestfield.

The 17-year-old made a number of appearances on the bench last season and is earmarked as a promising talent for the future, looking to follow in the footsteps of Jake Hessenthaler and Bradley Dack in becoming a first team regular upon progressing from the Gills Academy.

"I'm very excited and it means a lot to sign a professional contract," he said.

"I learned a lot training and being around the first-team last season, I feel like I've grown up and become a man.

"Hopefully I can make that first league debut next season, and do my best for the team whenever the chance comes."

Fellow attacking midfielder and former Tottenham youth player Emmanuel Osadebe, 19, also signed a new deal at the club this week, extending his stay for a year, with an option for another 12 months on top also on the table.



DEAL: Darren Oldaker



HOME: Maidstone United's Gallagher Stadium

Maidstone upgrade 3G pitch after promotion

MAIDSTONE United have announced that the 3G pitch at its Gallagher Stadium home is to be upgraded following the club's promotion to the National League.

The original plan had been to replace it next summer, however league rules require the very highest quality of 3G synthetic turf, and so the club's directors have had to move swiftly to commission a state-of-the-

art pitch in time for the new season.

The works will start next Monday and are due to be finished by mid-July.

Club chief executive Bill Williams said: "We regret the disruption to normal activities, including pitch hire and academy use, but the replacement is vital for our first season in the National League and this has to take precedence."

Darts re-sign Bonner from rivals

DARTFORD have announced they are to re-sign former defender Tom Bonner when his contract at local rivals Ebbsfleet United expires this summer.

Bonner left Princes Park in 2013, but is now set to return and help the Kent Senior Cup winners towards promotion from the National League South next season.

Boss Tony Burman said of his

signing: "He will be an excellent addition to the squad and he has now gained a lot more experience from his time at Cambridge, Dover and Ebbsfleet since leaving us three seasons ago.

"Tom is a good defender and has the hunger to succeed, and I have no doubt that Tom will help the club achieve their targets over the next couple of seasons."

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